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**OF**  
**Richmondshire.**



BY . . .  
**EDMUND BOGG.**

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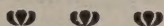
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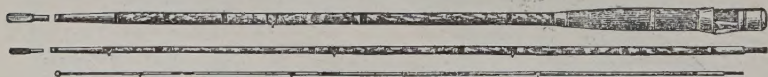
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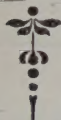
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THE WILD BORDERLAND  
OF RICHMONDSHIRE.





# The Wild Borderland of Richmondshire :

BETWEEN TEES AND YORE.

BY

EDMUND BOGG

Author of "Wharfedale (Upper and Lower)"; "The Old Kingdom of Elmet"; "The Golden Vale of Mowbray"; "The Abbey Vale of Yore"; "Regal Richmond, and the Land of the Swale"; Etc., Etc.

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1909.



## PREFACE.

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**T**HE Wild Borderland is indeed a fitting title for this wide and wild upland district, the nursery-land of five Rivers—Tees, Swale, Eden, Yore and Ribble—a stretch of beauty so varied by impetuous waters, vast sweeps of moor fastnesses, and from which a thousand streams leap madly to havens of comparative rest in lower ground, where their soft murmurings blend with the pleasant piping of nesting birds. Human history, here also, adds its quota of tragedies from an almost forgotten past, of which the now roofless castles and abbeys eloquently speak. The Song of Scott and the magic pen of Dickens, has immortally linked their names with the district of Rokeby and Tees country.

Thanks are specially to be given to Mr. Robert Rodwell for his large Map of the district, which prefaces the volume.

EDMUND BOGG.

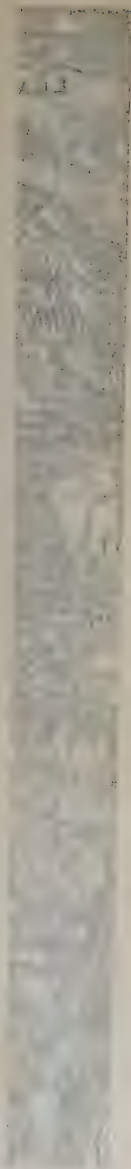




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1870

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of the British Museum...

Scale of Miles

Scale of Miles



# *The Wild Borderland of Richmondshire.*

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## CHAPTER I.

### ROUND ABOUT GRETA.

THE Wild West Upland or Borderland of Richmondshire, little visited because of its difficulty of access, presents an almost unrivalled series of pictures to the lover of Nature ranging from soft and graceful park-like pastureland around Rokeby and the Middle Tees valley to the vast and well-nigh trackless sweeps and swales of unbroken moorland, solitary and cloud canopied, reaching across the wave-like champaign on the east to the stony rill-laced mountain crests and ridges on the extreme west. Here and there on this lake-land of peat-pit rock, coarse grass, ling and rushes, are oases of verdant pasture as about Muker and between Hardraw and Hawes: these spots of relief to the eye appearing like green bays or creeks washing the deeply rooted feet of the flanks of the scarred and dun-bodied hills.

From and through this wild upland region three rivers, nowhere tame, often wildly turbulent, take their way—the highroad of the Storm—and many tributary streams account for the swirl and swish of running water being seldom out of hearing even on the finest days of summer calm. The scenery varies from that of



stern and lonely wildness to romantic charm, and is scarcely equalled much less surpassed by any other of like extent in the greater shire of York. This western basin-like border, enringed with its stormy heights--their very names Cross Fell, Water Crag, Rogan and Raven Seat, Nine-Standards Rigg, Lunasett (Moon's



A Moorland Scene.

[Landecker

Seat), Great Shunnor, Wild Boar Fell, Widdale (Wild-dale) Fell, Cam (crooked) Fell, Dodd or Tod (dead) Fell, and Weather Fell, tell their story and character--forms the western border 'march' of the ancient 'Palatinate' which we are about to endeavour to describe: if words indeed can express their awesome and transcendent features. These are comprised in the topographical limitations of the Wapentakes of Gilling West and Hang West, the district along the south bank of West Tees (Stanemoor) with Baldersdale,

Cotherstone and the Greta at Rokeby on one hand, and the upper watershed of Swale and Yore on the other, with that of Wharfe and Ribble at Cam Fell and Outershaw heights to the extreme south. In a few words this area may be summed up as the Cradleland of the adult dales of Swale and Yore—the nursery of the winds and fertilising waters, the Lyceum wherein the Elements perform their tasks for the benefit of Nature at large.

### THE BRIGNALL COUNTRY.

RECOMMENCING at Ravensworth (already described) we pass Gayles, Dalton and Newsham. At Dalton there is a ‘Camp,’ its name recallatory of bygone history; and near by is a Cairn beneath which the skeleton of a man was found. It is satisfactory to learn the stones were put back in position, and this chieftain of some long-forgotten tribe or clan left to continue his rest in peace. Another tumulus, story says, contained a Kail-pot in which was a large sum of money—needless to say *not* left undisturbed. Two men were in course of pulling down a wall, and below they found hidden a carefully wrapt-up parcel. The finder called out “Hauves!”—a claim for half—but the other, the stronger, snatched at the packet and shouted “Na hauves.” On opening out the wrapping, however, he cried to his fellow, “Here, thoo ma tak it all!” The contents proved mysterious if not gruesome: the skeleton of a child. On this story and the old and new stone burials we need not comment.

At Dalton a field is, or was lately, ‘held’ by tenure of providing a *grindstone* for the people of the place “for ever.” While we have gossipped we have reached Barningham, a village, to say the least, very pleasantly situated. The old church has been demolished for nigh upon a century, a few of its relics only still remaining. In pre-Conquest days “Tor” was in possession; later it came into the hands of a family to whom that fact gave them

their name—the de-Barningshams. After them it passed to the Scropes. The Church of St. Michael's was erected nigh the site of the first fane of piety, in 1816. Here, in the old days, the sexton was paid a certain sum yearly for 'Cat-whipping,' that is to say, for chasing them out of the churchyard, wherein, cat-like, they were wont to congregate for anything but purposes of worship. The practice points the radical change which has come over human thought since the days of the Egyptian Dynasties, when pussy was not only held sacred but worshipped.

But here we are at Brignal,

"Whose banks are blooming fair"

as Scott—a keen observer of natural things in association with men—sang in his imperishable staves of "Rokeby."

"O Brignal banks are wild and fair,

And Greta woods are green,

And you may gather garlands there

Would grace a Summer queen."

The place-name means conjunctively Old-bridge, from the Saxon 'Briggen,' and 'Auld,' whence by dropping of letters we have got to 'Brignaul' spelling it as spoken. A family of the same name (taken from the place where they lived) was seated here from a very early period; and an only daughter of one Richard de Brignal married William Phillip, of Stillington, who settled here during the 14th century. Their lands were held (by military service) of the Lord Scropes; and the Phillips are mentioned in the charter as being in the company of those famous archers who by their prowess as bowmen contributed largely to the victory at Agincourt. During Henry the Eighth's reign, one James Phillip was Steward to my Lord Scrope; he appears to have been by nature a greedy hard-fisted man, exacting compulsory loans from his tenants, any refusal on their part being met by a notice to quit or, more probably, an eviction! One Avery Uvedale of Marrick pitifully



complains of him thus: "His extorcions is almost cryed owt upon in everye poore widdowe's mowthe and he so vexethe many poore menne with proces and suits in the Law, that they be utterly undone, and almost readye to goo about in the countrie begging wot, staff and pouke."

Having a connexion with the Phillipses is the following tale, known as the Richmondshire Curse Towards the end of the 18th

century, two leaden tablets were found concealed in a tumulus on Gatherley moor. They were engraved upon in astrological characters, planetary signs, and also bore the following inscription: "I doe make this that James Phillip, John Phillip his son, Christopher and Thomas Phillip his sons, shall flee Richmondshire and nothing prosper with them in all Richmondshire. I did make this that the father James Phillip, John Phillip and all the kin of Phillips and all the issue of them, shall come presently to utter beggary and nothing joy or prosper them." This is somewhat curious and not very clear, but it would appear that it was John Phillip, a representative of the elder branch, who after this fashion of making a dummy figure and reciting some anathema over it worked the Spell. He would seem to have been in some way dispossessed of the estates, and his revenge took this superstitious course invoking by the 'Black Art' the mysterious forces of witchcraft and magic. Singular to relate the evil thus invoked did fall swiftly upon the family. Not one of them, it is averred, did ever after flourish. All the male descendants died without

issue, and the very name of the family became extinct in the district in which they had been settled. Such is the Richmondshire Curse. The Rev. S. Baring Gould has related other cases of successful "Evil-Eyeing."

Onward we go, Scargill with its hoary old tower lying to the south on the opposite bank of Greta, which chatters and clatters along in its stony channel, arcaded by its bordering 'palms' (Saughs), the demure dimpled landscape all aglow in the liquid gold of the afternoon sunlight. And now we reach Greta Bridge, a most charming structure alike in its fine lines and time-worn tints of mossed or lichened masonry. On the west side of the bridge sits, confidently awaiting the custom that fails not, the yellow lime-washed "Morritt's Arms." Here the hungry or the thirsty can be confident of their reward for making trial of delay: both inner and outer man will find refreshment. The hamlet of Greta Bridge is situated on both sides of the stream. In the meadow just behind the inn is a well defined Roman Camp. Between the writer's last visit and the previous one eleven years had elapsed, and his then companion, William Howgate, of Leeds, ever a keen lover of the beautiful, had passed away. Naturally one's thoughts reverted to the pleasant evening passed in the far-famed 'Arms.' William Howgate was a true-born 'Open Airst' and jovial companion. Turning over the pages of the Visitor's Book the entry, under date April 3rd, read:

|                 |   |                                                                             |
|-----------------|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| WILLIAM HOWGATE | } | On a Thousand Miles Wander through<br>the Border Country and Lake-<br>land. |
| EDMUND BOGG     |   |                                                                             |
| WM. CARTER      |   |                                                                             |

The following lines, from Mr. Howgate's pen are appended:

#### A PASSING THOUGHT.

A Trio true on pleasure bent  
Stayed at this Inn, where sweet content  
And beauty reigns supreme

How great the change from City life,  
Where poor folk struggle e'en with strife :  
How different these things seem !

—W. HOWGATE, Leeds.

Here at Greta Bridge, Rokeby, Barnard Castle and Bowes, all who visit this region tread in the footsteps of two literary giants — Sir Walter Scott, the “ Wizard of the North,” and Charles Dickens, the “ Household Word ” ; whose magical pens made of already romantic surroundings “ a Land of Faery.” In genius as in temperament the two men presented a strong contrast, their productions as opposite in theme as in inspiration, but both alike to be numbered among the Immortals, unless the tastes of generations to come alter radically from those of the last half century. Scott interpreted all the finer higher sentiment of Romance in association with scenes of natural beauty and historic significance. His light suffused the whole length and breadth of the land from higher Tees to Rokeby with a radiant glow as of freshly-stirred embers, and imbued with an old-world atmosphere of Feudality and Chivalry. His Romance was of the highest order, and wove into its very texture the old Ballad-lore of the Borders. Rokeby, too, as a pure poem is the setting for some of his finest gems of landscape description. Dickens, on the other hand, saw the living moving men and women of this land first, and the natural peculiarities of the stage on which they strutted, fawned or ambled, second ; which method of creation has resulted in “ Nicholas Nickleby,” with its Squeers, John Browdie and Smike, and many another, in giving a curious element of combined pity and revulsion to the “ wind-swept stony land ” of which he wrote. He placed his characters in austere surroundings well within the ‘ Modern ’ times of the latter half of the 19th century in which he lived ; indeed only in “ A Tale of Two Cities ” and another work did he desert the hum-drum town and country of the middle Victorian



era. So much must be remembered and allowed for in any pilgrimage such as ours into the shrines the two magicians made so famous.

Charles Dickens's account—in a letter to his wife—of his coach journey to Greta Bridge, sounds drear enough. But naturally it would appear desolate to one whose home of adoption was the streets of London; and who knew best the decaying Thames'-side towns, and the sleepy minster cities of the South of England. The writer followed in the exact track of Dickens' coach, save the mark!—it was 59 years later—one dark lonesome night, and he, like the gentle cynic, felt the extreme of satisfaction when the orange rays shone from the windows (not of the 'George' but of the 'Morritt Arms') swam into his ken through the thickening murk. The famous old posting house which Dickens actually rested in adjoins the eastern foot of the bridge—the George, and its appearance continues to be typical of the state of 'traffic' in pre-railway days. The George is not now a licensed house, but still receives visitors. But readers will no doubt like to read Dickens' own words, from a letter written to his wife, indited from the 'George.'

"Thursday, Feb. 1st, 1838.

The Mail kept on well, however, and at eleven we reached a bare place with a house standing alone in the midst of a dreary moor, which the guard informed us was Greta Bridge. I was in a perfect agony of apprehension, for it was fearfully cold, and there were no outward sign of anybody being up in the house, but to our great joy we discovered a comfortable room, with drawn curtains and a most blazing fire. In half an hour they gave us a smoking supper and a bottle of mulled port (in which we drank your health), and then we retired to a couple of capital bedrooms, in each of which there was a rousing fire half way up the chimney. We have had our breakfasts—toast, cakes, and Yorkshire pie, a piece of (pie) beef about the size and much the shape of my portmanteau, tea, coffee, ham and eggs; and are now looking about us. Having finished our discoveries, we start in a Post-chaise for Barnard Castle, which is only four miles off, and there I deliver the

letter given me by Mitton's friend. All the Schools are round about that place, and a dozen old abbeys besides, which we shall visit by some means or other to-morrow. We shall reach York on Saturday I hope, and (God willing) I trust I shall reach home on Wednesday morning.

Love to all friends.

Ever my dear Kate,

Your affectionate Husband."

After describing his journey North by way of Grantham, he said, "As we came farther North the mire grew deeper. About eight o'clock it began to rain heavily, and as we crossed the wild heath there was no vestige of a track."

This moorland south of Tees is of course much less wild now.

The windows of the inn, antique in their every line and wrinkle as it were, seem to be ever gazing with a blank regret at the "wizard woods of Rokeby" which they look out upon. And partakers of the same mystic influence of the dim days gone by, our dreams in the "Arms of Morpheus" (lying in those of Morritt and not of George, as we did), were shot and interfused with Dickensiana, stage waggons, mail coaches, masked highwaymen, and spectre trees whose arms were wind-strained all one way like dark-lock'd witches abroad in the darker night. We awoke, however, not to the sound of pawing roadsters or jingling harness, but to the confusion of tongues—the babel of a colony of rooks nestling in the woodland hard by. The din and confusion that a community of "the many-wintered crow that leads the clanging rookery home" can create is almost inconceivable to those who have not heard it.

Greta Bridge, one flying span, as though the builders thought little of it, is a beautiful structure: a certain distinction being conferred upon it by its artistically pierced stone balustrade. Here the road to Bowes and Barnard Castle runs by the Park wall under beautiful arcading tree-arms, magnificent as timber in their stately proportions.

Rokeby conceals itself in a casket of Nature's own furnishing—between Greta and Tees, but is well-nigh hidden in trees.

The Rokeby's are an ancient family (their surname implies Danish origin, the tribe of the Roke or Rokers—there is a 'Roker' in England, North of Tees, too). The Rokeby's were here soon



Greta Bridge.

after the Conquest. In early Plantagenet times they were a notable race, ruined later by the Civil Wars. During the Scotch Wars of Edward the Third's reign, two knights of Rokeby, both named Thomas, gallantly distinguished themselves; and later, in 1408, a Sir Thomas Rokeby suppressed the rebellion of the Earl of

Northumberland at the battle of Bramham Moor. They had a small castle or fortified peel-tower, which was destroyed during an incursion of the Scots subsequent to Bannockburn fight, all except the chapel, with the doorway and the ground-sills of the walls. The Rokeby of this period having married the heiress of Mansfield of Mortham, left the ruined castlet and built Mortham Tower on the other bank of the Greta.



*Arms of the Rokebys*

*J. Harrison*

In the reign of Henry VIII., Edward VI., and Mary, there resided at Mortham Thomas Rokeby, Esq., a plain man as might be, who lived so in the good hearts of his countrymen, that when his son, Christopher Rokeby, was assaulted at Gaterley Moor horse race by Christopher Neville (brother to Henry, the unthrifty Earl of Westmoreland) whom the earl had sent with a hundred men to kill him, there was not a gentleman in the field but cried "A Rokeby!" and were proceeding to very hard blows upon the Nevilles. But the good old Thomas, in his capacity of Justice, entreated peace, saying, "Gif (although) it grieves me to see him bleed that bleeds, yet peace, the peace!" And the king highly loved him that could so well get the love of his country.

On the 29th April, 1520, part of the Church of St. Mary's, Beverley, fell, and fifty-five persons were killed. Sir Richard Rokeby, knight, and Dame Jane, his wife, gave £200 towards its reparation, for the which they were to be specially prayed for.

Ralph Rokeby says, "I have heard that a bear-baiting and a mass being both at one time in Beverley. There was near a thousand people at the bear-baiting, and but only five and fifty at mass, who were all slain, and ever since they say there, 'It is better to be at the baiting of a bear, than the saying of a mass.'"

From Greta Bridge we wander through the woods high above the sparkling loquent water, ever babbling or chattering in a tireless delirium of tones, through groves and glades of marvellous and bewildering beauty, until we reach Mortham's Tomb, standing in the wood by Greta's side.



Mortham's Tomb.

What shall we say here that will not seem affected? It is difficult, for we are in Romance Land. Every square yard about Rokeby is transformed—to eye through mind and memory—as though the invisible wand of some mighty magician had been lightly laid upon it. Winding through woods by Greta's side is

“A stern and lone yet lovely road,  
As e'er the foot of minstrel trode.”

The place is holy ground, and of good omen seeing that it is full of sunlight and flowers, a fantasia of fairyland on the theme of Nature, fixed in fair colour on fine lines to an accompaniment of



woodland warbling. Here we are at Dairy Bridge, crossing Greta just above its junction with Tees. The bridge is cool and dimpsy as a dairy, too: arms of trees in full foliage interweave and make a canopy of green for it. Moss and lichen dye and colour its stonework, ferns and brake blooms border its thickets, while early purple orchises bedeck its environing meads. Through the arch, looking up stream, far away in the wooded banks, the water can still be seen flashing kingfisher-like down its bowery lane of greenery, the hues ranging from rich yellow through amber to blue grey.

What can we say of the Nuptials of the waters? What "Meeting of the Waters" half so suggestively sweet? Greta, the graceful Bride running to meet her ampler lord of Tees—and the emergence of their waters: "a thing of beauty" and "a joy for ever"—an illustration of Endymion in England! Many have been the artists who have attempted its depiction on canvas. One oil painting in the Leeds Art Collection does in some respects do justice to the mystic quality of the scene; but it is only a few souls who can to the full appreciate such loveliness as is here, where Greta meets Tees; those who are "worthy to receive the sight" that "never was on land or sea," we dare not add to the attempts, or hope to be among the "few but fit"; but to stand below Dairy Bridge in the glory of a clear summer evening, when a mellow golden radiance steeps everything in colour and the air drinks like wine, is alone—without any other examples of scenes—worth the journey to see. The water of the Greta hard by Tees furnishes an optical illusion: it has the appearance of running up-hill! There is a swirl of amber water, foaming (champagne-like) over and by huge marble like rocks, here piled in admirable confusion by some Titanic force in the past, in and along the Greta's path. Form and colouring alike are too transcendent for mere words to express. The picture is permeated with witchery and glamour, sublimely picturesque, grandly impressive: a temple



and a bathing place for an Undine prepared by the hand of Nature alone.



Dairy Bridge and Mortham's Tower.

“The cliffs that rear their haughty heads  
 High o’er the river’s darkling bed;  
 Were now all naked, wild and grey,  
 Now wavering all with greenwood spray  
 Here trees to every crevice cling,  
 And o’er the dell their branches fling;  
 And there all splintered and uneven  
 And shiver’d, rocks ascend to heaven.”

In the triangle of land formed by the junction of Tees and Greta are a few vestiges of Rokeby's ancient church, pulled down upwards of a century ago. Some mouldering tombstones still show above the greensward, and the base of an ancient cross and an old font point to the spot where for centuries children were brought for baptism—where generations of men have knelt in prayer, and have been laid to rest beneath the velvet carpet of earth within hearing of the everlasting lullaby crooned by the loquence of clear 'living' water.

Just to the east of the Greta and Dairy Bridge stands Mort-ham's Tower. It is now a farmstead. The memoirs of Rafe of Rokeby tell us that the original peel of Rokeby was burnt down by the Scots, and later (as already said) the border-like tower was built to withstand any future attack. It is mute now, yet eloquently enough in its stony strength, reminding us of the tragic and pathetic memories it stands for—the slogan cries and clangorous din of a foray fight—no pitched battle, but a sudden hawk-like swoop of reiver upon his quarry, shouts of triumph short-lived and ending on a note of pain, the wail of the tortured flesh under a non-fatal stroke, or the last groan of one "sheut" and spent in body and spirit. And after the unprovoked battle what a keen wail of anguish must have risen to the frowning sky above, around the old embattled peel! It recalls the days when the borderer *did not know* whose cattle he should drain at the next milking: it recalls the 'Bold Buccleugh' when "nine-and-twenty knights of fame—

Hung their shields in Branksome Hall;"

likewise 'Awd' Walt, Scott of Harden, Hobbie Elliott, Johnnie Armstrong and others raided England for fully sixty miles south of the 'debateable land.'

"Lord God isn't this a pitiful case,  
That men daren't drive their goods to the Fell  
But limmer thieves drive them away,  
That fear neither Heaven nor Hell."

ran the old ballad full of pathos, yet one sufficiently indicative of the disturbed state of alarm and ferment under which the whole countryside laboured.

Connected with this tower, too, is a grim legend. A certain lord of Rokeby in a fit of jealousy did his lady to death with a dagger, and the blood-stains uneffaceable on the stairway are declared to be those of blood which dripped from the murderous steel after the deed was done. The ghost of this lady of Rokeby, known as the Mortham "dobby" (a Northern English term for 'spirit,' akin to the Scotch 'browny') long after continued to haunt the scene of its earthly sojourn. Mr. Morritt, in his well-known Letter to Sir Walter Scott, describes humorously, how, at length, "the Parson by talking Latin to her, confined her under the bridge that crosses the Greta at my dairy, but the arch being destroyed by floods in 1771, it became incapable of any longer containing a ghost." It is "thought"—says the chronicle—the spirit was swept away in the waters, for it has not been heard of since!

In the wood behind Mortham is a tomb formed of immense blocks of Tees marblestone, richly emblazoned with crests and armorial bearings, toned to a lovely antiquity of tint by the finger of time. Scott felicitously describes the spot:

"South of the gate, an arrow flight,  
Two mighty elms their limbs unite,  
As if a canopy to spread  
O'er the lone dwelling of the dead;  
For their huge boughs in arches bent  
Above a massive monument,  
Carved o'er in ancient Gothic wise  
With many a 'scutcheon and device."

The two immense limbs were still outstretched benedictively over the tomb on the occasion of the writer's first visit some fourteen years ago; a few years later one of them had succumbed to the pressure of a great storm of wind. The tomb is that of Sir Ralph Bowes, brought here from Egglestone.

We are now again by winsome Greta, rendered so marvellously 'classic,' for all time.

"Beneath her banks now eddying dun,  
Now brightly gleaming to the sun,  
As, dancing over rock and stone,  
In yellow light her currents shone,  
Matching in hue the favourite gem  
Of Albin's mountain diadem."

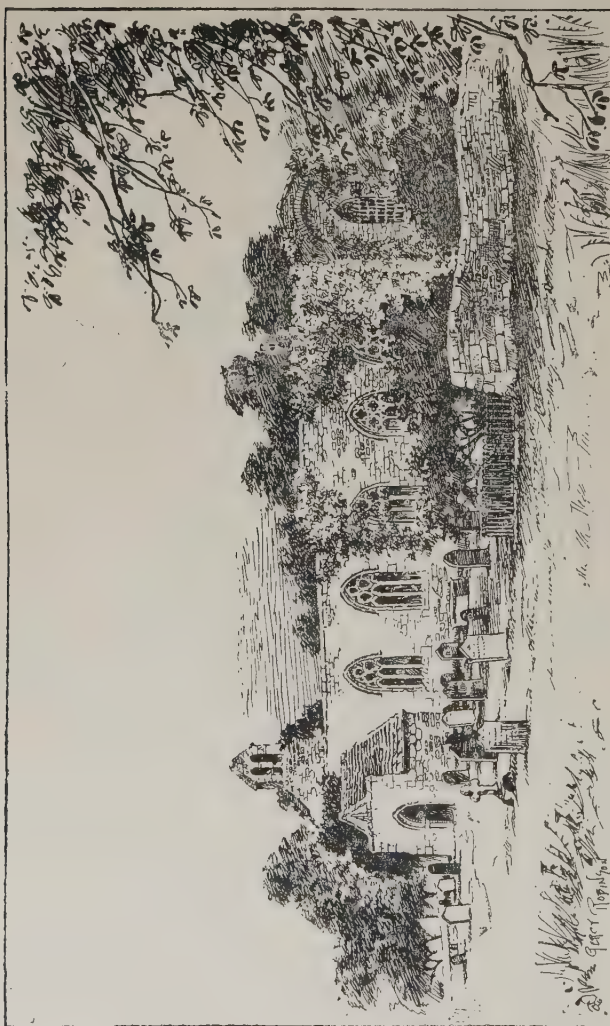
Here is Bertram's Cliff,

"Where purple heath profusely strown,  
And throatwort with its azure bell,  
And moss and thyme, its cushion swell"

The throatwort being not a herb for the quinzey, but the great sky-blue Canterbury-Bell, which is distinctively a North Country wild flower—a giant indeed among wild flowers, for it grows on occasion in damp situations that favour it, quite to a man's stature.

Two and a half miles down the Tees from Rokeby is the ancient village of Wycliffe—if not the birthplace of the great Reformer, it is of a certainty the homeland of his ancestors who took their name from the settlement here. John Leland wrote, "They say that John Wiclif (hereticus) was borne att Ipreswell, a poore village a good mile from Richmond." So it appears the tradition ran that the Reformer was born at Hipswell, for the ancient Topographer wrote "They say" etc.

It was evening on our visit. The sun had set, yet a mystic light irradiated the spot, and our feelings were strongly appealed to by the harmonious lullaby Tees sang in our ears. The church is quaint and venerable, with its flat roof. Inside are some old relics: a rare font, some years back rescued from sacrilegious use as a water-trough. The chancel has brasses to the Wycliffe's memory, and there are sculptured fragments of mural slabs, which belonged apparently to an earlier church, inserted in the exterior walls. On our visit, in the Rectory house hung a portrait of John



Wycliffe Church.

[Percy Robinson.]



Wycliffe, copied by Sir Antonio Moro from an original one. It was presented, as an ecclesiastical heirloom to the Rectors, by Dr. Thomas Zouch, himself a rector, towards the close of the 18th century. Wycliffe is, indeed, a beautiful "haunt of ancient peace" resting by its pasture and wood bordered river overhung by laurel-like willows; the Tees is the stream of 'Palms,' over a score kinds, myrtle-like or olive-like in leafage with purple, green, rose-red or yellow varnished withy-wands, growing upon its banks between High Force and Yarm—whilst the ever sounding music of its waters and the drum and clack-clack of the old mill, make a delightful accompaniment.

Further down stream are Ovington and Gainford, places of interest, but want of space must excuse a descriptive account of them here.

The Tees is the natural boundary between Yorkshire and Durhamshire; upstream from Rokeby for two miles from Greta's mouth to beyond Eggleston Abbey, it has, in the course of ages, cut a way for itself in the bed-rock, much as Wharfe does above Bolton; and the amber beaded frothing water is overshadowed by huge trees, elm chiefly, with the translucent yellow-green foliage of beech, the darker opaque gum-alder, with the introduced sycamore and horse-chestnut, the feathery lattice-leaf ash, and many another. Nature has been lavish here indeed—every rood upward a holy rood dedicated to and sanctified by her, reveals new beauties. Here it flows sedately enough, prim and brimful to the daisied turf's edge; there it courses swiftly on, with spume and froth, as if voicing at every little obstruction; and, again, anon, plunging cascade-like in wild commotion from some dark ledge into some darker pool, the glinting lights of the surface seeming to suggest unknown mysteries of depth and doing; the river's banks, as a foil furnishing a fair flower picture changing with the season of the year: in Springtime Scott's "rath primrose" and fairy-star wood

chickweed, in Summer meadow rue and silvan forget-me-not, in Autumn the stately spired throatwort belfry, the gaping orange wood rattle, the old-gold button-bloomed tansy, and the great trumpet bine (*Convolvulus*). Scott, though not a botanist, was struck with the beauty and tender-clinging lady-like character of the Silvan Vetch or Tare, for he says of this very reach of the river :

“Profuse, the wood-vetch clings  
Round ash and elm, in verdant rings,  
Its pale and azure-pencilled flowers.”

The Tees ! the beautiful Tees ! Lovely indeed are the glimpses one gets of this glorious river running flecked with foam on its oily glistening surface—as it were the glossy flank of a hard-ridden steed—deep in its arcade of greenery ; the marblestone of its bed shewing every branching vein through the glassy amber medium ; and one cannot but pause a moment to speculate how long this process of marbling and enamelling the rocky channel has taken the water in its ceaseless uninterrupted flow over it. We cannot answer. Time, sometimes, may not be measured in centuries, or eons even. By some indomitable, unwearying unending force Tees’ bed has been carved and chased, and just *so*, into fantastic shapes unlike aught of man’s making. We leave the problem to others.

From the Abbey bridge of Eggleston—a magnificent span !—can be viewed a scene which, to call it one of bewildering beauty says nothing comprehensible or adequate enough. This belvedere is beyond the power of language to express. The river sweeps, like a mighty scythe or Excalibar (that “*flashed as it fell*”), into the very heart of a dense palpitating growth of beech trees, their masses embosoming in limpid opaline half-light the green-blue blade that to all seeming is plunged into them. Of course it is the other way round, the river runs towards us through the green arch,

but the illusion is perfect. Where do fairies dwell? Here yet, surely—if anywhere. Tees sparkles like a jewel, now a diamond, now a sapphire, now a topaz, as a fish leaps, leaving a dimpling ripple that rings an octave of colour changes before it declines into a shimmering reflection of the green-leaf canopy above. Swallows and martins, scythe-winged, purple-backed, white-breasted, curvet



Eggleston Abbey.

[William Wright

and sweep over the water, skimming the surface, occasionally kissing it; while among the fringing moss draped dripping rocks and boulders, wagtails flirt perkily, and water ousels display their white vests as they dip in the rock pools of some stony stretch. A golden gloom, an amber air as it were, filters through the lattices of the impending greenery—the *tout ensemble*—resulting in scenery so exquisite that few spots in the county can equal it, and as certainly none surpass the view unfolded to us from the graceful Abbey Bridge.

A rood or two further on we dip down into a basin-like depression of Tees valley. Here still remains the Mill of the Monks, and its old undershot wheel still casts up the dripping flow, and adds its pleasant rumbling drone to the more sonorous music of Tees.

Eggleston, unlike other abbeys, does not rest in the hollow of the vale, but crowns a bold eminence looking down into "fairy Thorsgill" and on "sprite-fed Tees." Scott, alone of all writers seems to have seen Eggleston's environage with the eyes of a true poet keen to see the symbolism for humanity, the "sermons in stones, the books in the running brooks," in the subanimate features of Nature.

Eggleston Abbey is now a total wreck, and "Ichabod"—the glory hath departed—might well be written over all but the changeless natural beauty of the place that knows it no more. Portions only of nave and chancel are about all that remain to reconstruct its story from. The later monastic buildings are in a sad state of neglected disrepair. The tale of a vanished grandeur is breathed, eloquently enough, but only to those who know how to read the rune. Above the soil wherein the great knights of Rokeby, the Fitz-Hughs and the Nevilles find rest in silence, stinging nettles, untidy tall grass and weeds grow rankly. There are some large memorial slabs of Tees marble—a sort of limestone—and on one of these is this inscription in bold character :

THOMAS ROKEBY, Bastarde



Jesu, for passion's sake,  
Have mercy on my sinful heart !

Others there are from which the brasses have been torn out and on which are finely cut the Cross and the Sword.

Leland, who saw the abbey before it became ruinous, says, "I saw in the body of the church two very faire tumbes of gray marble. In the greater was buried as I learned, one Sir Ralph Bowes. And yn the lesser, one of the Rokesbys."

Musing, Fancy weaves and conjures up an old-time scene depictory of the Abbey's Dedication.

Bishops and Priors, with their retinues from afar, are there—prominent figures all. The Norman Knights in glittering mail, and Barons with their appropriate following, mingle with the holy brethren in this—the first service—act of worship at Egglestone. The service is choral—the pathetic wail of the opening “Kyrie Eleison,” whereat all bow low, is succeeded by the “Gloria in Excelsis” (whereat all are revived in spirit), which vibrates along the groined roof and newly-raised aisles. Following this, we seem to hear the sonorous roll of bass voices of lusty monks and friars proclaiming the “Credo”—‘*I believe,*’ etc. Then abased in contrition all would bow again, the proud humility of the true Believer, as the “Agnus Dei” was chanted, one and all smiting their breasts and crying out “*Mea Culpa*”—Mine the sin, mine the blame! deprecating punishment, hoping devoutly for Mercy. Then a solemn stillness, the hush before the outburst of human heart's aspiration, and then the Benediction! In those five acts of prayer and praise, the sum of Man's Life, and Death, and Resurrection. Amen.

Now all have gone into the Silence—become shadows of the Past, abbot, monk, bishop, knight, squire and serf,thane and churl, all the pride of Rite and Chivalry, and almost barbaric splendour, faded like “the baseless fabric of a vision.” The Baliols, the Fitz-Hughs, the Nevilles, the Bowes's, the Percies, the Rokebys have gone with the abbey for the most part, the fane that as Scott says lies

“ Wild and waste,  
Profaned, dishonoured and defaced,  
Through storied lattices no more  
In softened light the sunbeams pour.  
Gilding the Gothic sculpture rich  
Of shrine, and monument and niche.”





Fairy Thorsgill.

[A Haselgrave

“Fairy” Thorsgill adjoins, opening out upon the abbey, and a graceful one-arch pack-horse bridge spans the stream just above where it falls into Tees, whilst wheeled vehicles have to splash through the shallow water. And Time has dealt more gently with this fairy-like structure than with the abbey that yet meant so much more to many. Nature’s lowly growths, moss and lichen, have but made its lines the more attractive, bepearling, enamelling and silvering the arch with the beautiful-for-ever tints and dyes of Age. Scott considered the stream flowing down “fairy” Thorsgill as its “murmuring child,” not one of his best similes, for murmuring does not well express the silvery light high toned tinkle and chatter of a little beck over stones.

The gill itself ever exercises a delightful fascination over the lover of Nature. ’Tis a dell where one might well believe ‘the wee folk’ were wont to hold their revels in—and do yet! And why not, since other things besides beauty “lie in the eyes of the beholder”? If fairies ever were, fairies are yet! The rill plashes laves its way between soft slopes of viridescent turf (flowers innumerable making a pattern on its carpet) tinkling and crooning its little song, sounding as if they were dying echoes of the Past.

Here, says an ancient chronicler, “is a faire quarre of blak marble spotted with white in the very ripe of Tees.”

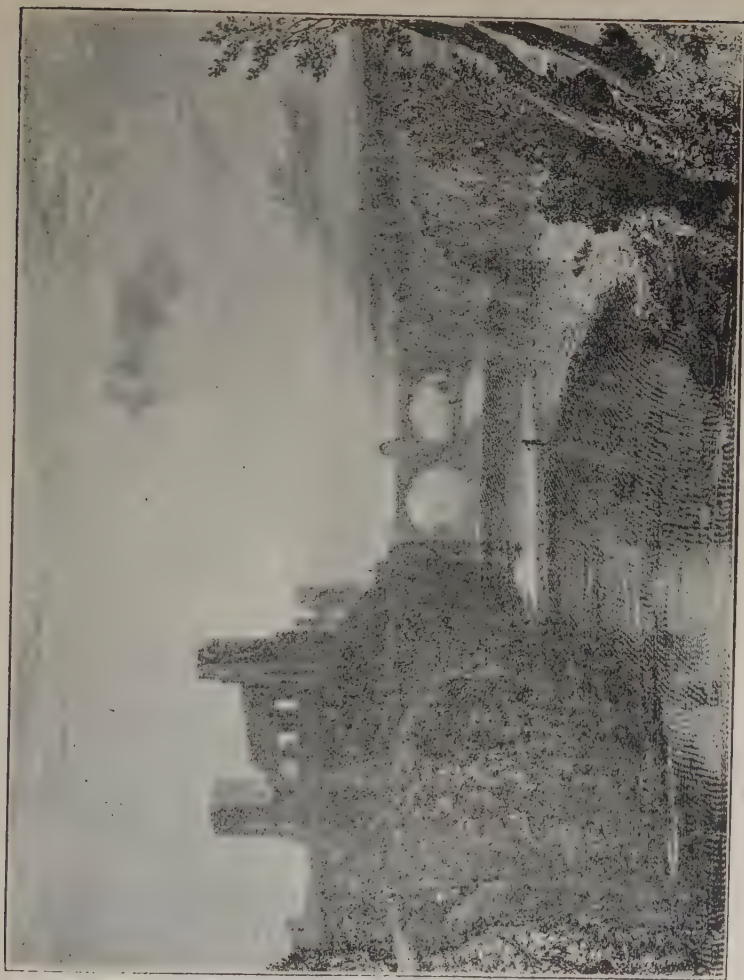
Nowhere in all its course is Tees more spaciouly beautiful than here. Fine trees abundantly add their courtly majesty of mien to the scene; the river is broad enough to mirror the splendours of Nature about it, the silver billows of cloud that float above it, and the bordering lesser beauties that draw anear and bending over it see themselves as in a glass, darkly or lightly according to the hour of the sun. And another feature the bosom of Tees present here. From the great waterfalls of Higher Teesdale,

masses of foam and froth, like wreaths of snow, float gradually down, undissipated by distance. These drifts come down irregularly; and hereaway, by children and the young, they are known as "Peg Powler's suds."

Who was Peg Powler, some one may ask? A malicious sprite, akin to a water kelpie, whose greed was human life; or merely some locally famous beldame of the middle ages who was wont to wash clothes in the river? We cannot say, but the "suds" are visible—possibly a sign that there has been unusual spate at High Force—and the bairnies of middle Teesdale are well acquainted with the name, and its association with risk, danger, death. To a nervous child the very mention of "Peg" will bring fright, and a splash or unusual sound from the river is enough to send a child home screaming. Eerie stories are whispered of men lured to destruction by noises o'night, the cry of the river spirit luring its human victim never to be heard of again. Such is the dread power "Peg" Powler wielded in this district.

However, we must not loiter. On! and over the brow of the next rise the old ford and boundary town of Barnard Castle comes into ken, its crumbling towers of masonry limning themselves in pearly grey, and the modern pile of the Bowes Museum in the foreground upreared statelily as if some well-preserved adamantine Palace of Stone. Barnard Castle itself is not included in the Richmondshire palatinate with which this book deals—it belongs to Durham, and we must not, strictly writing, cross the Tees, but surely no scenery-lover will raise serious objection to some slight outline of the topographic meaning and story of what the eye can see from the Yorkshire side of the river.

The general situation of Barnard Castle is that of Richmond, a massy pile on a high rock on the north bank of a considerable stream, with a bridge at its base almost. To Tees, Barnard's



Barnard Castle.

[After J. M. W. Turner.]

Castle is what Richmond's finer and greater stronghold is to Swale. There resemblance ends. The mount on which Barnard built his castle, however, has not the sheer face of Richmond, nor is the castle so bold in its conception, nor so grandly sublime in its lines. Building later, Baliol may have copied the general idea of Alan the Red, placing his great keep on a commanding coign of vantage dominating a river, on the southern verge of his vast dominion situated in the 'forest' of Marwood in Teesdale, with the lordships of Middleton on the west, and Gainford on the east. From the point at which we view it, the old town, with its steep streets and uneven roof-lines, retains much of the glamour of its mediæval decades, the high-pitched old bridge in the foreground leading into the antique winding Bridgegate (formerly haunted by a Spectral Hound, a source of terror to the inhabitants), and the clustered ruinous towers of the castle crowning the crag and conferring a general appearance which association connects with feudal days and ways.

A brief historic sketch of the family who built this castle will be advisable here.



## CHAPTER II.

## BARNARD CASTLE.

A FITZ-BARNARD or Bernard—of Gallic origin—is the first of his name on the historic scroll. One Guy Baliol was given certain lands by William Rufus in 1098, and his son, Bernard de Baliol it was who had the castle erected in the early years of the 12th century. His son Bernard succeeded him as Lord of

“ Proud Barnard’s bannered walls,  
High crown’d,       .       .       .  
The sovereign of the lovely vale.”

He was the grandfather of John Baliol who married Devorgilla, daughter of Allan, Earl of Galloway, and this John was grandfather of the John Baliol who inherited the Crown of Scotland. He it was who founded the College at Oxford bearing his name, which on his death was completed by his wife Devorgilla, the Scots heiress, and which on his death had his heart embalmed and placed in a casket which she set on her table, and did reverence to it as to him whose in life it was! That was true wifely worship! At her death his heart was placed on hers and buried under the high altar of Dulcecor (or Sweetheart) Abbey, founded by herself. A noble monument indeed is that richly decorated Gothic ruin, standing on the lonely Solway shore—an unspeakably touching memorial shrine, Love and Faith fixed in stone as in life were the twin spirits which so keenly felt their pulsings.

It thus came about that the Teesdale Baliols were also Lords of Galloway and heirs to the Scot’s Crown, through the person of John Baliol, son of the above John and Devorgilla, his wife.

This period coincided with the acme of Barnard's Castle glories, when the great Noble crowded the narrow steep street with his retainers, jostling one another in their eagerness to do homage to the new-made King. For the moment they might



New, or Sweetheart Abbey.

[*Edmund Bogg.*]

almost be excused forgetting that Barnard Castle was an appanage of the English Crown! The sun of Baliol's splendour was soon clouded over, however—the conditions under which he took the Crown were too harsh—in an evil hour he turned towards France and laid his ruin in train. There was another great Yorkshire Baron, his rival, Robert Bruce, who aspired also to Scotia's iron crown, and won it, worthily too, after bitter struggle by great

personal self denial; and what is more—held it. With this the rule of the Baliols at Barnard ended for ever. It passed, swelling the already vast possessions, to Anthony Beck, Bishop of Durham, and later, the King of England, aggrieved at Beck, gave it to Guy Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, who for five descents kept possession of it. these Beauchamps and their successors the Nevilles.

One writer says, “Barnard Castle again became a centre whence on more than one occasion the interests of the kingdom were gathered, and plots discussed which ended in tragedies the bitterest in history.” It fell into the hands of Richard III. by his union with Anne Neville, daughter of the king-maker. Before he became king, Richard resided for some time at Barnard Castle. Could the crumbling old walls speak, what might they not tell of that dire struggle of rival monarchs, the cause of the War of the Roses, when the land was deluged with blood. During the Rising of the North it was defended by Sir George Bowes, the rebels being in possession of Raby, six miles north-east by east.

The Nevilles of Raby and the Percies of Topcliffe were the chief movers in the Rebellion; and Sir George Bowes at Barnard—eyes and ears open, willing spies everywhere and at home—saw all the plotting, and the coming and going betwixt the two great houses. He failed not to keep the Government apprised of what was afoot; and we all know how pitifully tragic was the outcome of the foredoomed outbreak against firm-set authority. After much indecision among the leaders (foremost being old Francis Norton, the Nevilles and the Percies) they laid siege to Barnard, garrison, which in defending, Sir George Bowes met with great difficulty. There were many traitors within the fortress, however, and he had to surrender on honourable terms after a siege of eleven days only.

A brief extract from Bowes's chronicle diary of the siege is illuminating :—

"I found," he writes, "the people in the Castle in continuall mutinye, seaking not only by great numbers to leape the wall and run to the rebels, but also by all menes to betray the place and all in ytt to the rebels. So far as in one day and nighte two hundred and twenty-six men leapyd over the walls, and opened the gates and went to the enemy; of which number," he adds gleefully, "thirty-five broke their necks, legges, or arms, in the leapyng."

But Nemesis was on the track of the insurgents. The leaders, with their horsemen, fled over the Border, or wandered among the lonely 'Hopes' of the Borderland; others took ship and escaped to the Continent, where they spent the rest of their lives as exiles, far sundered from kith and kin, and the halls of their ancestors which had passed from proud father to proud son for generations, knew them no more. James I. bestowed the manor and castle of Barnard on his favourite, "lickspittle Carr," the Earl of Somerset. On his disgrace it reverted to the Crown, then to the Vanes, ancestors of the present owner, Lord Barnard.

Access to the castle ruins is obtained through the yard of the 'King's Head.' The area covered is 7 acres. From Richard the Third's window there is a fine view up Deepdale and the Tees valley. One room, the 'Hermit's' chamber, is so called from a person affecting that character, once resident in it for a considerable time. He had been crossed in love, and so left the world to dwell here in solitude. The 'King's Head' is the chief hostelry of "Barney," and here Charles Dickens and his artist-friend, "Phiz" (Hablot K. Browne) stayed while Dickens collected the material—the 'local colour'—for his "Nicholas Nickleby." He brought with him a letter of introduction to a Mr. Barnes, a solicitor, and here Dickens received his visitor the first evening after his arrival.

One may sit in the old seated bay window, smoking one's cigar and look across the street on much the same picture of still life and living odds-and-ends as the Novelist did 70 years back—so little have the times changed the irregular frontages, and the market-day pedestrians. It is pleasant enough somehow—so innate is hero-worship in us—to think that both the Wizard of the North and the Prince of Story-tellers have roamed about these streets, wynds, and alleys of Barney 'Cassel,' and left immortal impress of their muse in their lines, whether verse or prose; and well worth the time and cost to be privileged to sit in the very "seat of the mighty" thus, and fancy the author of "Rokeby" rehearsing in his fertile brain that Romance, which contains some of his happiest passages of scenic description and two of his finest lyrics, tintured, nay dyed deep in the actual facts of marble rock and pencilled flower-sculptured stone, and the feeling of the time and place. The interest is immediate and intense, as one sits in the old bow window-seat and sees across the way the shop where Mr. Humphrey (watch and clock maker) dwelt during Dickens's visit. Exhibited over the frontage of the shop was a big clock-face, the name of Humphrey in large capitals surrounding it. It stood out so conspicuously that it seems to have greatly impressed the novelist. He held several conversations with the old clock-maker regarding Squeers' and other Schools, and it is generally understood—not contradicted by his biographer—that Dickens chose his title of "Master Humphrey's Clock" from the circumstance. What sentiment and pathos is there not displayed in the injunction in Mr. Newman Noggs' epistle to the young gentlemen at Do-the-boys Hall:—

"If you should be near Barnard Castle there is good ale at the King's Head. Say you know me and I am sure they will not charge you for it. You may say "Mister Noggs" there, for I was a gentleman then; I was indeed"

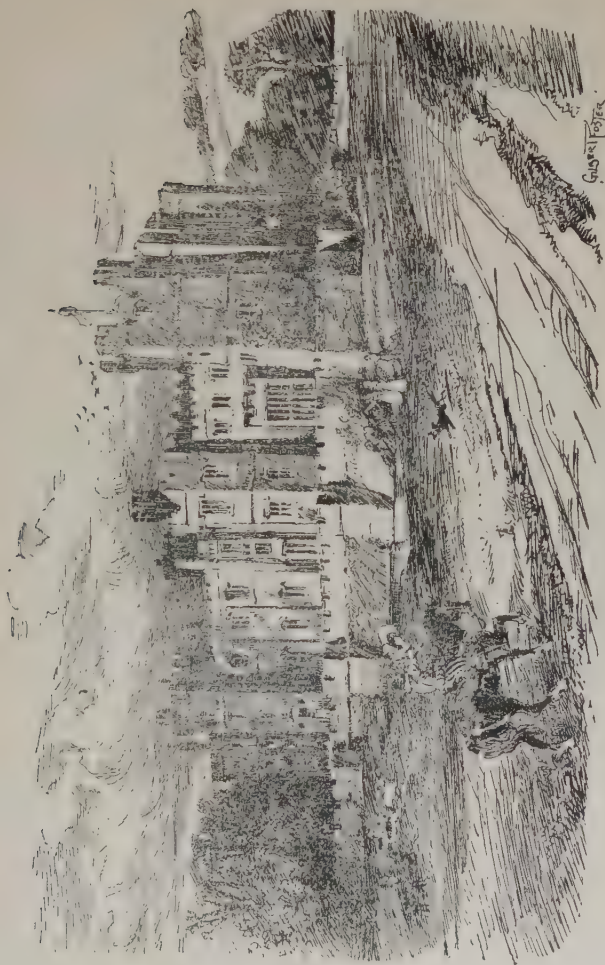
Thorngate, Bridgegate, Newgate, Market Street, and Galgate,



are the chief streets, and a spot adjoins the latter, known in ancient records as Hanglane, all of which tell their own tale. In Thorn-gate are two very picturesque houses, one with three stories of square bay windows—an interesting feature, but more noteworthy from the fact that it was here Oliver Cromwell slept, October, 1648. He was met by the leading townsmen, who regaled him with burnt wine and shortcakes. In this street there was formerly an Augustinian Convent. The Parish Church of St. Mary's was built by Bernard Baliol, and has been restored and altered until but little of the ancient structure remains. Still, it is a shrine full



Old House, Thorn-gate, Barnard Castle.



Raby Castle.

of absorbing interest from the relics in and around it, and the political and ecclesiastical vicissitudes it has undergone.

A few miles eastwards are the Castles of Streatlam and Raby, the first once a possession of the Bowes family, whilst Raby derives its chief interest from its long link with the Nevilles—the Princes of the North.

What startling scenes, big with the fate of men and kingdoms, rise to one's mind when standing before the commanding battle-mented walls of Raby Castle—its features much as of old in the severity of the lines—a stone scroll of history, emblazoned with the armigery of the Nevilles, one of whom in his pride and glory stood greatest and last of the old Norman chevaliers, Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury and Warwick.

Those who have looked upon the magnificent piles of Middleham, Brancepeth and Raby will fully understand the prowess and power of the Nevilles in “the brave days of old.” Such was their prestige and influence that few dared thwart an expressed wish of theirs. It was Robert Neville (dubbed the “Peacock of the North”) who slew—we might say murdered, now—the Bishop's seneschal in open day on the Elvet Bridge of Durham. Their participation in the ill-fated, ill-conceived Rising of the North was the herald of their downfall, as well as that of many another ‘noble’ house.

“Now was the North in arms; they shine  
In warlike trim from Tweed to Tyne,  
At Percy's voice: and Neville sees  
His followers gathering in from Tees,  
From Wear, and all the little rills  
Concealed among the forked hills.

Seven hundred knights, retainers all  
Of Neville, at their master's call,  
Had sate together in Raby Hall!

Such strength that earldom held of yore ;  
 Nor wanted at this time rich store  
 Of well-appointed chivalry."

In the past Barnard Castle has often been a byword or term of reproach—it has been described as "the last place that God made!" Anyone outlandish, eccentric in dress or manners, or, peradventure, dour or stubborn must have been of "Barney Cassel breed." "Come, come, that's a bit o' Barney," is a reproof to a



Tomb of Ralph Neville and his two wives—Staindrop Church. [E. Bony]

great boaster. "Did ta kna t' toll-man o' Barney?" is another catch-phrase. If the questioned one replied "Na—who was he?" the retort was "Wey, his neam wer' Ananias!" Schoolboys from the adjacent villages were—and perhaps are yet—at feud with the Barnard lads, and fling this taunt at them:—"A coward, a coward—a Barney Cassel coward; darn't come oot to fight a battle." This couplet refers to the siege of Barnard Castle, although Sir George Bowes was not in any way a coward. Barney and Bew Castle are irritating epithets which scolding wenches hurl at one

another; and any project which has miscarried or turned out badly is "a Barney." The origin of these, in themselves not objurgatory words of reproach, *may* be due to and explained by the undoubted fact that in the old days Barney was a hotbed of the more or less outlawed—evil doers flying from the hands of justice, who had only to cross the Tees to be in another jurisdiction from the one they feared. A county writ did not run in any other county but that in which the offence was committed. Up to the 18th and well into the 19th century, private feuds were openly fought out in a brutal manner in the streets of the town. In the case of murder even there are several instances to prove that the murderer might fly across Tees out of Yorkshire, and claim the Sanctuary of St. Cuthbert's, Durham.

On the 31st October, 1509, there fled to the Cathedral Church of Durham one George Warcopp, who, having rung the bell there, demanded immediately the sanctuary of that church; for that he being insulted on the 27th of this present month, struck with a hauger a mortal wound on the neck of one Richard Goldsmyth, of Richmond, in a certain lane near Richmond, called St. Nicholas Lonyng, in defence of his body, of which wound the said Richard on the same day died; for which he demanded the liberty of St. Cuthbert.

Henry Jenning of Richmond, plumber, on the 15th of April, 1479, came to the Cathedral Church of Durham, and in presence of a notary and certain witnesses, demanded the sanctuary of the said church; for that he, on the last day of March at the Anchorage, in Richmond, by violently throwing a stone at one William Markyndale, tailor, hit him so fatal a blow on the head that he died of it within three days after; and as a sign of his request of the immunity of the said church he rang the sanctuary bell.

1492, March 1st. William Tailbois, of Qwaston (Whaston) parish of Kirby rawynswath (Kirkby Ravensworth), took refuge at Durham for having murdered Hugh Herkay, of East Layton, with a small staff.

1510, June 15th. William Cowling, of Richmond, fled to Durham for refuge for having murdered one William Sawthouse, of Richmond, on the 13th of June last, at Gatherlemoor, near Skeeby, by striking him on the leg with a dagger, of which he died the same day.

The middle of Barnard Castle Bridge was also in the past



often the scene of irregular marriages. One, named Cuthbert Hilton (middle 18th century) performed there the illegal wayside weddings. Midway of the bridge was either in York or in Durham—as wish or interest required. His celebration of the nuptial rite was very original: as the couple leapt over a broomstick he repeated the following lines:

“My blessing on your pates,  
And your groats in my purse;  
You are never the better,  
And I am never the worse.”

In 1716, we have mention of the marriage of an unknown tinker to a girl of the tender age of twelve years! In 1716 too, the Vicar of Gainford suspended one John Maresby from the curacy of Whorlton—a layman and a celebrant of clandestine marriages, guilty also of certain other grave offences.



Barnard Castle.

[Cooks.]

Space forbids a longer dwelling on Barnard Castle. During our retrospect we have been seated on the south bank of Tees, the round towered masses of the castle and the town's grey jumble of roofs climbing high above the glinting river, and presenting to our eye a fine picture full of elements which the mind can follow into their tragic or more humane significances. On this, the Yorkshire bank, are High and Low Startforth, these syllables meaning *not* 'start out,' but street and ford. Here a Roman way, or 'street,' crossed the river—a branch out of the main road between Catterick and Brough. This Latian way can still be traced from Bowes to Binchester by the revealing place-names of Startforth, Streetham, Staneton, and Stanedrop, all in direct line to the main 'street' at Shildon, and so on to Bincaster.

We now keep along the south or Yorkshire bank of the Tees, past the quaint old stone bridge with its fragmentary remains of dwellings huddled about it; and as we go west, past the new iron footbridge and enter upon a spacious demesne of parkland. It is the Sabbath, and our ears are beguiled pleasantly with strains of music coming from the 'forest' of Marwood (boundary wood) which borders the opposite bank of Tees. It is the town's band playing in the delightful shade of "the greenwood tree." We also rest ourselves awhile in the greenwood shade, up and down stream alike are fine views unfolded. All we see is beautiful. The water is mirror-like, reflecting clearly the verdant boughs overhanging its surface, and the bright summer sky. For a background, the forest trees of Marwood rise tier above tier on the farther terraced bank, brilliant in full sunlight, the majestic tambour and broken wall-faces of Barnard's Castle uprear high above Tees brink. The music continues to float across to us; and we note the kaleidoscope-like effect made by many figures, variously garbed, young men and maidens, passing to and fro over the Percy beck, which opposite us emerges sparkling from the sylvan shades ere falling

into Tees. The stage and its setting (unconscious on the part of the moving figures), struck us as incomparably natural and beautiful. The mind's eye is not always satisfied with landscape however diversified, if it lack a clear key note of movement, best supplied by animated forms of life. To us here was a new sensation of delight, one of Nature's beautiful scenes made more perfect by the presence of man—not even music being wanting—and the whole blent into a Harmony, one might venture to say, of Heaven on Earth; a pastoral, a beautiful river idyll, a fairyland or bit of arcadia, like a scene from the brush of Watteau, only much more spontaneous and less of the artificial in it,

The old 'sylva' of Marwood, although in some places now denuded of its trees, stretches from Barnard Castle to beyond Cotherstone, opposite to where the beautiful Balder—stream of Odin's son—falls into Tees. The scenery is of the essence of Romance. Now and then Tees foams and frets through jaws of marblestone, anon it flows smoothly between terraced banks, to again break its pace in a rapid swirl that gives out quite a roaring drum or drone. From Lartington, with its fine Hall, and Catholic Chapel dedicated to St. Lawrence, and its pretty village with sweet plots of beflowered ground in front of the rose-tree clad dwellings, a small beck winds through the woods to the Tees, the main trunk of a water-tree (viewed as on a map) whose rilly tributary branches cover some hundreds of square miles of York and Durham shires. The gorse or whin here grows in such profusion that in bloom the braes are a mass of beaten molten gold. The path winds about, now up, now down, now through a bowery vault of foliage, and all the time we can hear the music, the silvery pipe of the rill, slow notes, quick notes, now low in minor key, now boisterous in major, until at last we pass out of the wonderland into the open by the Tees' high viaduct, and cross an old stone bridge 'neath the shadow of huge beeches, whose twigs make lines of shadow that seem to turn the green turf into a mosaic of bewildering design.

## DEEPPALE.

DELIGHTFUL Deepdale whereinto we now turn, joins the main vale or dale a few hundred yards above Barnard Castle. A path winds by the streamside up through the woods of this charming glen, a labyrinth of greenery, a bower fit for Titania, or the Matilda of Scott's poem. In the beautiful bed of the stream rests, immovable these sixty thousand years (for its weight must run into many tons) a splendid huge "erratic" or "travelled" boulder.

"How cam'st thou here a stranger in the land,  
What stopped thy progress in this pleasant vale;  
Wert thou from Shap, and brought by fairey hand?"

Its material is that of the unmistakable granite of Shap Fell, many miles to the west. In the Ice Age the never melting snow formed a thick cap of ice over most of the North of England, and which flowed down slowly—inches daily—from the high hills to the plains; as the flowing glaciers do from the Alps and the mountains of Norway to-day. The hard stones embedded in this moving mass ground the hills over which they passed into the delicately sculptured curves which a change of climate has now made visible. This boulder must have started too late to get so far as its relations, found all along the banks of the Ouse. A glacier travelling from Shap down Teesdale met the Norwegian one from the east and was forced to travel southward, filling the vale of Mowbray with ice level with the top of Hambleton and reaching beyond York. The Askham ridge continued miles south-east of York and is part of one of the moraines where it unloaded its freight of stones, etc. Askham gravel pits are well-known for their scratched pebble.

If the chorales of the birds signify anything, romantic Deepdale is their sanctuary. Vegetation is at its lushest and best, firs of colossal size succeed other trees only less magnificently impressive by their girth and vigour. Every rood upward some new phase

of beauty is revealed. Nature has hidden in rich garments of foliage what harsh notes there might be in the bare framework of the scene. Skyward, giant pines upshoot their blue-green or bronze-frosted pyramids, making a fine foil to the yellower greens of the shade grass and the blue sheets beyond sheets of wood-hyacinths which are spread in ethereal beauty of tint over the soil. The fir-tree trunks have the effect of a pillared cloister; we are in Nature's Sanctuary indeed, and—listen!—yonder blackbird flutes the exquisite harmony and proportion of it all.

Our attention however is now arrested by a structure of man's, a triumph of mind in its way—the graceful Deepdale Viaduct, appearing designed to carry some fairy chariot across the gorge, and not the huge iron-horse of the rail. The aerial lightness of its girded iron ribs and stays seem as filigree work from its vast height. Ten-girded standards are lashed slenderly together, with no inartistic result. Some Ruskin might say the rail-bridge had spoilt the glen, had ravished it of faery; others hold that the bold juxtaposition of man's work in wrought iron with God's in green wood have shewn (on the other hand) how extremes in style join happily together; here beauty and utility is triumphantly combined.

Above the lofty bridge-way the loveliness of Deepdale increases, with this chief difference, a note of unstudied wildness moor-born, the peat-stained waters rush and jet along among the large boulders which obstruct their course. On one hand Cat Castle, a titanic perpendicular wall of rock, stands up high above the stream, tinted by thousands of winters and all the time-stains that old-age lichens and moss growths can give it. At its foot a sweet airy turquoise blue and pink carpet of forget-me-nots, the modest white stitchwort and the sweet-in-death woodruff by the airy beauty of their details give the necessary cooling relief to the eye here. However, we cannot analyse everything of loveliness in its turn.



Higher still the Deepdale gorge trends to the west, the wood closes in and forms a sombre, it might be a gnome-haunted grotto. Far below in a wilderness the beck churns over a series of rocks ; looking higher up and farther away the beck can be seen coming, dropping down towards one from the rim of the plateau of Stanemoor, where the solitude is only disturbed by the plaintive cry of moor fowl, the shrill pipe of the wind through the wires of the ling, and the fretful voice of falling water.

We now turn towards Cotherstone, passing Lartington lake. A storm was brewing in the west, and thunder reverberating and massing clouds gave to the water a darkling fearsome look. Sunlit water looks companionable, cloud shot expanses seem ever lonely and threatening—so we pass, with a shudder, to the moor road to Cotherstone, noting on our way every mile or so a couple, a lad and his lassie, wending their way over the lonely moor to their solitary-set home or farmsteads, just discernible in the distance. They add the pleasant note of human interest—the too-often needed reminder of our mortality—to the otherwise depressing moorland, where the curlew's note or the snipe's cry are the most joyous, towards the shades of night, of anything living.

#### COTHERSTONE,

FAMOUS for its cheeses, is a long straggle of a village of one street, yet it is picturesque; it has two small greens, and its cottages are roughly built of grey stone with dark brown flag roofs. The creamy coloured walls of some of the houses make a contrast and give it a well-to-do aspect. An antique feature in the centre of the village is the old Red Lion Inn, with steep thatched roof, and ancient interior. The Fox and Hounds is another hostel of other days. Here the antiquated custom of the Court Leet is held still. It is perhaps as well to place on record here, that one Will Mecca (Metcalf) of this town, a cattle dealer, is a most singu-

larly and eccentric individual, and the most original character to be found among the great Mecca clan residing in the three dales.

Next day—a fine June morning—we are seated on the high green knoll rising above the confluence of Tees and Balder. Behind us we have the one solitary remnant of the once strong



Cotherstone Village.

castle of the Fitz-Hughs. From our feet the ground slopes sharply into a crescent-shaped hollow, like a tilting ground; and the eye can follow delightedly the winding of the river and its fringing wood for far enough. Shadows chequer the sunlit glades, and the tree-tops even change their hue from yellow-green in light to a woolly olive in shade. A breeze sighs peculiarly in the trees; a robin hops fearlessly within a yard of us; and the bells of Cotherstone sweetly chime the English call to prayer. But the

Temple we are to worship in to-day is the great roofless fane of Nature with her music in our ears, birds her choristers, the winds and her waters the instruments. In the foreground an orchard is dappled pink and white with bloom on gnarled and lichened trunks and twigs, each lovely as a spray in itself, a surfeit of beauty almost in mass; the emerald grass is thickly set with daisies, an enamel sown with pearls. The whitewashed front of a cottage blinks and dazzles in the sunlight; over the Balder's banks are 'hangers' of nutwood, white-tasselled bird-cherry—"its flower-falls like miniatures of the rills of the hillsides in flood," as Dr. Lees has aptly put it—silver-leaved rock-pear, and rock red-currant, with forest trees, rising line upon line; all in the serene calm of the moment looking as if painted and set there changeless for a tableau; "as idle as a painted ship upon a painted ocean," and yet while one watches, changing in tone and colour, like a chameleon its hues, from sheenings of gold and green to light bronze, and again to the antique purple greys and blue-verts where the pines are passingly in shade. To the artist's eye a scene may so alter itself as if by magic—even before the pallet is arranged the elusive fairy of a tone has fled, to be succeeded by other hues equally fleeting. But one thing has not vanished yet, the Cotherstone bells are still a-chime, and "the bonny birdies" carol on, spurred to imitation one might fancy, and the Balder sighs a grave undersong of sound, everything in Nature to-day is in harmony.

The Castle of the Fitz-Hughs occupied an almost impregnable position, moated by the waters of Tees and Balder quite half the circle. The veriest fragment remains. But the path which leads round the high bank of the castle brings us to the surprise scene of the district—the meeting of Balder with Tees. It is a natural Paradise, a resort—when time was younger—of brownie and pixy, and it remains to-day as perfect a Nature-picture as Yorkshire

holds up to her votaries for appreciation. From the battlements of their keep—we reflect—the old Fitz-Hughs looked down on this scene which has more than once been the stage for feud and bloodshed, sack and plunder. Here, where we stand, has often been heard the wild slogan of the Scottish reiver or moss-trooper, and the amber peat waters of Balder and Tees have been crimsoned with blood of battle, while the air has thrilled to the lament of the vanquished. The Tees water wailed a requiem in its every note. But words fail—even Scott's lines do not fully rise to the occasion.

Scott has told how "the Northmen came, Fix'd on each dale a Runic name"—one, that of Balder (unlucky son of Odin)—how they "rear'd high their Altar's rugged stone, And gave their Gods the land they won," going on to remark :

"Then, Balder one bleak garth was thine,  
And one sweet brooklet's silver line  
Till Tees his tribute claims, and then  
With one bright dive swims out of ken. . . ."

To the north of where we sit, towering dizzily over Tees is the huge rock of Percy-myre Castle,\* steeped to its feet in the wild river with the romance of the wilder huntsman (a Fitz-Hugh) who, on his return from the stag-hunt in Marwood, either leaping or through some unwary slip of hoof, rolled over into the river running rapidly so far below :

"And far below, in that dark land  
Crept the river on its way,  
Like some huge serpent coil'd around  
Its quivering ghastly prey."

This river tragedy of Tees recalls to memory the sad leash-hound fate of the boy Egremont at the "Strid" crossing of Wharfe above Bolton's Abbey, as this is above Eggleston's.

\* A "myre" was a master of ceremony, a chamberlain, a lay not a knight's seneschal.

Through scenery varying every rood but never tame, we reach Tees' Mill, only to garner yet another harvest of impressions. Tees is particularly boisterous here, never weary of brawling out its persistent note of defiance of servitude, its refusal to be curbed or tamed at the bidding of such a pigmy transitory creature as Man.

Ruskin in connection with Turner's topographical alterations in his landscape scenes, has pertinently remarked upon how scenery is first made, as to its skeleton, and then influenced as to its vestiture by the hills and rocks, precipitous cliffs and vegetation; remarking how clearly and definitely Turner took Yorkshire characteristics and feature lines from its dales for types in his paintings of scenes elsewhere. He may have been influenced (Ruskin allowed) by the castle-crowned cliffs on the Rhine (which indeed the strongholds of the Tees and Swale much resemble); but his conceptions were derived originally from Yorkshire, and supplied "correspondent imagery" to other landscapes. He "almost always preferred to put a precipice *low down* on the hill side, rather than near the top, as at Knaresbro' and Richmond; and for a view he often chose one of those piles of 'horizontal' beds of rock which usually form the faces of precipices in the Yorkshire dales."

Here an intelligent ruddy-locked lassie of some 14 years, winsome-eyed and the picture of rose-hued health said "Good morning," and we were glad to find out that she fully appreciated the charming character of her home surroundings. She had lived here eleven years, we were told, and would be loth to leave it. The mill has been made into cottages.

High up on the south bank of the stream here, with larches of graceful plumes of natural mourning, rests in solitary state the body of one Abraham Hilton, of Barnard Castle, who died in 1892, aged 87. His grave is here (like James Broderick's on Swale's high bank) by his own special desire; and fitly has he chosen his 'six foot of earth.' The larks lilt in the high blue, wild doves croon a lullaby in the larches, and Tees completes the requiem with its ever eloquent cadences.

As pleasant as conspicuous features of this daleland are the



lime-washed walls of the farmsteads: snow white they catch the sun and reflect its brightness back on the eye-like moonstones.

Returning to Cotherstone we traverse the street again to Balder Bridge,

“ By the side of the sons of Odin  
Shalt thou fashion a tale to be told,  
In the hall of the happy Balder,  
There shall the tale grow old.”

a place of delight ensconced under a wooded brae. A bowshot up-



Balder Mill.

wards on the right bank and we are at Balder Mill, a spot ideally rural and retired, about which Nature has woven her ever effective spell of loveliness. The dark old overshotmill wheel stands out (like an ear one fancies) against the gaunt grey mill wall, surrounded by the tender green of Spring foliage, ever a-listening for the soag which happy and bold little Balder continuously sings with a changing note for storm-time and drought, as it ‘hirples’

or trips by from "the cloudland of Stanemoor"—the cradle of Tees water.

The scene at the mill was formerly of domestic bustling simplicity. What a change here too, now! The cottages adjoining the mill are not only empty but falling to ruin, the miller has finished his life's work and gone hence; the once 'busy wheel' rests on its moss-beclogged axle deserted and draped in funereal growths of water weed, silent—a reproachful witness to the change, as it were, a sermon in wood and stone on the text "better rub than rust," whilst Nature has not only retained but enlarged her garments of beauty. Bird life, too, finds this an uninvaded sanctuary: the kingfisher shoots past on the wind like an arrow over the water, and through the arcades where tree joins tree; the white-breasted sooty plumaged water-ousel goes dip, dip, from moss-stone coign into bubbling pool after pool; other birds, like the wood-wren and blackcap warbling their sweetest lilts and trills as if in emulation of the bold brook's strain. The mill precincts make a perfect fairy dell of glistening dew-spangled emerald leafage, with turquoise forget-me-not, ruby robin campion, white-starred wood stichwort, and feathery anise kexes gleaming like gems set in enamel.

One relic of antiquarian interest, strongly significant of troublous days, still to be seen at Cotherstone is the ancient Font by the roadside near Doe Park, whereat thanks were offered by pilgrims and others for having crossed the bold waste in safety: danger lurked in the hedge backs and thickets by the lonesome waysides, so much so that "all brush-wood thereby" was periodically destroyed by the parish authorities; then all city gates were closed at "sundown." The font, too, was used as a blessed resting place for coffins on this the corpse-way to Romald's Kirk. Devout and finicking in their ways the Cotherstoners were the origin of the skitting nominy—"Cotherston, where they christen't cauves, hopped lops and knee-banded spiders,"

According to Gibson's Camden, in the 17th century there was high up the dale an eruption (not volcanic certainly, but equally awe-inspiring to who saw it), a bog burst, when the peat in its basin, swollen by accumulated water, and like dough rising in a bowl, rushed over the edge of its basin in a semi-fluid flood, and carried destruction down the dale. A somewhat similar phenomenon occurred in Ireland a few years back, and another in Nidderdale has been made the climax in "The Drakestone," the powerful Yorkshire novel by Mr. Oliver Onions.

Compared with Greta-dale or Deepdale, that of Balder is of tamer character, having its fountain-head springs in the elevated Stanemoor ridges and swells of Kelton and Hunderthwaite Moor. Where the 'Black beck' joins the Balder grows, or perhaps one should write grew, a lovely wild flower, the rare Great Yellow Goat Saxifrage (*S. Hirculus*), but now (1906) a large water-works reservoir, nigh a mile long by a quarter broad, has been constructed and the exact station, just where Black beck joined the Balder, is now many feet under water.

Further up Tees, near Woden's Croft, the deadly nightshade flourishes—a survival perhaps of old monastic or Danish immigrant occupation.

The sandy-moor gathering ground of the Balder and the Deepdale stream of Lartington and Hunderthwaite moors is a home and headquarters of "Black-game"—

"The black-cock springs on whirring wings"

as the poet has it—its peat waters converging to a point a little south of Cotherstone like the fingers of a hand to the palm; and the district has been made "classic" by the Thirsk F.R.S., Gilbert Baker, the Kew Botanist, much as Scott made Thorsgill the focus of attraction for scenery after his "Rokeby" appeared. The view itself ranges from the particular and near, to the general and dimly distant; the whole gamut of loveliness being included,

Some two miles higher up Teesdale is the ancient ville of Romalldkirk, the old centre of population for the Upper part of the dale. Its ancient name was *Romaldeschere*, the termination indicative of the Saxon era, this place-name, as also perhaps those of Balder—if Odin's son was its patronym—Woden's Croft and Hunderthwaite at least significant of Long Ago. The present church is a large one, and its grey tower confers an aspect of venerable dignity to the old town it dominates and gives its name to.



Romalldkirk Village.

The Domesday Survey makes no mention of a church, merely saying the place was “waste”—a consequence of Norman ravagings. The parish is “a moorland one,” and cultivation has only begun within a hundred years or so to remove the bleak aspect of the most extensive parish known, larger even than the old far-reaching one of Halifax. In area it was one-seventh of the County of Richmondshire. H. Fell Pease in his precise brochure “Yorkshire in the 12th, 13th and 14th Centuries,” of 1881, distinctly avers that wide extended wastes till lately spread over the immediate vicinity of the place.

The dedication to a Saint ‘Romauld’ or ‘Rombauld’ is unique—no other sharing with it this name of some unknown good man

of old. Pease remarks that "the probability is that these extended wastes constituted the outskirts of the Saxon parish of Gilling, and as population extended itself along the valley of the Tees this wide district was severed from it, and put under the protection of a Saint then popular, now forgotten. We don't know who he was, but we know who he was not. He was not the St. Romnalde, of Celtic blood, Bishop of Dublin, and a Martyr." There was an English Saint, Rumald, born in Northumbria.

"A wonderful child,  
For ne'er yet was Saint, except him, upon earth,  
Who made 'his profession of faith' at his birth,  
And when scarce a foot high, or six inches in girth,  
Converted his 'Ma,' and contrived to amend a  
Sad hole in the creed of his grandsire King Penda."

The foundation in post-Domesday, was due to the family of the Fitz-Hughs, whose predecessors were Bodin and Forfin; and the circumstances of the time doubtless governed the assignment of such a wide parish to its overlook. These Fitz-Hughs also gave a barn or laithe for Divine Service, whence the lonely Laith-Kirk of the present day on the bluff overlooking the junction of Lune with Tees some few miles higher up the valley. The nave of Romald's Kirk is the oldest portion extant, and is of Henry the Third's period; the second or Norman church following the original Saxon one, must therefore have been in its turn destroyed to make room for the present fabric.

Romaldkirk is notable as being the place which saw the beginning of a curious kind of voluntary "tithe" in the early Norman era, viz., the bequeathing before death to the church, to cheat the Devil (in the guise of executors), of a portion of the goods of living men. At first this bequest before death on the part of several men was refused by the then rector, who wished to carefully ponder their intention and make it "legal." Finally agreeing to their importunities, accepted this pre-mortal bequest, which



was, besides one of the best cattle enjoyed before (the tithe), another best and the ninth part of the goods of the giver when dead, and if no wife or heir, one-sixth. This grew to be such an abuse—inimical to heirs—that the parishioners of the Archdeaconry of Richmond refused to pay this post-mortal legacy. In 1254, before the Earl of Richmond and others, this was by suit abated, and these mortuaries being finally abolished by Henry VIII.\*

The Fitz-Hughs had one of their burial places here. Romaldkirk has a fine village “green”; in its centre is a great white willow tree, and beneath its branches is the village pump. The pump marks an ancient spring, and though the willow loves water it is not long lived as oaks are, and old inhabitant can or could recall several large willows, successors to each other, on the green. It is pleasant to muse here and trifle awhile in scenes that can gladden the eye of anyone. No part of the Tees valley is more beautifully diversified than this middle course from Cotherstone by Egliston bridge to the junction of Lune with Tees. The southern bank of Tees has a pastoral and park-like charm, with horizon limits of dim purple-grey moors, and occasional scarred ‘rig’ lines, the river (often hidden for a space in greenery) where unshaded to be seen flashing, falchion-like, in a steely-blue curve

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\* But Lord Peter of Savoy, then Earl of Richmond, interposing, that strife was finally put at rest before Lord John, Dean of the Arches of St. Mary at London, and others, as is manifest from the following composition, which was submitted to by all parties—“That for the future the minister should have no share of utensils, such as ploughs, etc., or of such things as were made ready for eating or drinking, or of ready money, or of gold or silver vessels or ornaments; that he should but take one of the the best cattle; that when the deceased had a wife and children, the wife should have one-third part of the goods, the children another; and of the remaining one-third part which belonged to the deceased, one fourth part should go to the church; where there was a wife and no children, or children and no wife, the wife or children should have one-half, and the church one-fifth of the other half; and where the person died without either wife or children, a sixth part of his goods should go to the church, that is, to the rector, vicar, or curate of the parish.

Dated on the Friday next before the Feast of St. Margaret the Virgin, in the Chapter-house of St Martin the Great, London, A.D., 1254.

between sheer walls of low cliff, into which in course of ages it has bitten its way deeply and more deeply.

Looking up stream from any coign of vantage, stern Mickle-fell over Kelton fell ridge can be seen due west, more to the north and right the gap or trough in which Tees runs, with that mining outpost of men Middleton Teesdale on the Hudshope slope below the frowning Eggleston and Bollihope moors, is magnificent indeed.



Eggleston Bridge.

[John Pratt

The river Tees is at once a wonder and a mystery. A child of the clouds, of the heather and the water-logged peat hagg, it is constantly on the rush, ever downhill over a succession of cascades and 'forces,' few of which have been christened by man, tho' the spray does it with a persistence akin to religious zeal for every one of them, great or small. All have some distinctive beauty of their own, of the child's face in tears or the rugged features of some

mad Lear. Looking from here, on this day of our visit, in the dark crevasses of the distant mountain ridges snow drifts are to be seen, sometimes at mid-summer even. Such was the aspect in 1907, the hills of higher Teesdale were capped with snow, and its white fingers streaked the slopes some way down.

The Tees, called by the Latins 'Teifa,' is born amid stillness and solitude except for the speech of Nature, the wild tempest's voice, and the roar of the foaming cataract, in the region where the foot of a traveller seldom falls. The Tees rushes forward in its early career as if chafing to escape from its mountain birthplace. How desolate the scene at the 'snout' of the cauldron, the rocky vessel over whose lip it runs from that lake-like expansion above called the "Wheal!" There, as we stand on the wooden bridge of a single plank and look down on the boiling



Looking on to the Brink of rushing waters—High Force. [W. Wright

throng of water, leaping and hissing in never-ending altho' varying whirling confusion, an awe takes the place of wonder in one's mind. From the wheel of ruffled waters the Tees leaps successively over and down cliffs of basaltic iron-like rock 200 feet, in all a series of 'rapids' being formed, and where over plates of limestone clear falls; when, a lower level being attained, between the wall-like precipices of Falcon 'Clints' on the Durham side and Cronkley Scars on the Yorkshire side, the course is gentler over rough moorland, *blue over* in spring with the vernal Gentian, which grows nowhere else in Yorkshire, and ruddy at a later season with the alpine Bartsia, past the old lead-pencil mill to that magnificent fall, the High Force, and there, in two streams (divorced by a huge jagged rock) is rushed over layered limestone and whin sill rock into a dub full of hidden terror—a 'hell' of boiling waters!—for who would peer into its depths. The dark blue-green pine 'planting' adorning the north bank affords a wonderful foil—indeed, *makes* the picture here. It is difficult to describe the scene, for it is, in truth, indescribable.

High Force once leapt, the Tees careers madly onwards, restrained only by the jagged up-slanted rocks which mostly make its bed one of anything but rest, until the rock walls narrow down, and at Winch Bridge we have a parallel, in a sense, to the Bolton 'Strid.' But no leap is possible, and so the river had to be spanned by a Suspension Bridge (formed of long rods and links supporting a footway) of which the present one is the second. The first was the earliest bridge of its type in Europe. It spans a gorge-like trench of Whinstone rock and Tees, where it slips breathlessly through with a long drawn out sibilation like an agonised sigh, as though in sore tribulation. It so impresses many a one, though the banks are diversified in level, thicketed and wooded, and are everywhere gay with such a variety of wild flowers as is not to be matched elsewhere in Yorkshire. Winch Bridge's "wild garden," Dr. Lees

says, contains over a hundred different species, some of them both rare and beautiful; for instance, Don's downy red rose, the golden alpestral cinquefoil, the halberd-leaved penny-cress, the bottle-brush equisetum (*umbrosum*), the wild cluster-pear, and many more. Here the Tees vies in its rainbow hues and glints with the bank-flowers. We cannot but leave this north-west Richmondshire border—a region of almost heavenly beauty—with exceeding regret, for we may never return.

From Middleton, a ten mile walk south across Lunedale and athwart the moorland plateaus and swells variously known as Mickleton and Cotherstone moors, brings one to Bowes. This is a depressing and desolate region, and it stretches away on three sides over almost trackless hags and swales of heather, whereon rise as silver-sanded grains and sikes several small rivers that fall into Tees above Barnard's Castle. A few clumps of wind bowed and scarred trees stand out silhouetted against the sky, which recalls Kingsley's lines—

“No lark could pipe in skies so chill and grey.”

On our walk across this waste, inky clouds threatened to vent their anger on the earth as they flew by. Now and again a black-cock or his mate would rise almost from under our feet with a whirr and chuckle. The whaup's ominous-sounding call-note and the lapwing's mournful remonstrance, a wail and shriek combined, contributed to heighten the impression of savage solitude. A dark clump of fir trees, or the white walls of a lonely farmstead emphasised the feeling by drawing one's attention pointedly to the absence of human occupation and home associations.

The folk-lore which always gathers about such scenes as this is not wanting here, where its natural origins are. Strange sights, and stranger sounds, as of men at war in the air, invisible, are to be heard on this moorland tract; and fearsome forms of ghost or



warlock *seen*—by those with strong imaginations ! Peradventure, a headless horsewoman gallops swiftly by on the wings of the wind ! The story runs that the first Fitz-Barnard abducted a rival chieftain's daughter. Attempt at rescue was made, and a skirmish on this moor ensued, during which the lady's head was severed from her body by Fitz-Barnard ! Hence the apparition. A fig for such old tales ; useful, if at all, to pass away the time whilst 'on the road.' And here we are at Bowes.

## CHAPTER III.

## BOWES.

OUR first glimpse is of snow ploughs in the railway sidings, suggestive of the wild gales and snow blizzards of winter and spring which sweep over this district, on a well-named Stanemoor, such as even an 'iron-horse' is not exempt from. But Bowes is a place of austere and distinct individuality, cold and bleak as its aspect imports, situated on the eastern dip of "Stanemoor's shapeless swell." If Scott has enveloped the whole region of Tees from Mickle-fell to Gainford in an aura of glory, set in a frame of natural beauty, even so has Charles Dickens in his way, by the human glorification of the incidents of everyday and school life in "Nicholas Nickleby" given Bowes and its "Do-the-Boys" Hall a fame that is world-wide.

Bowes consists of one straggling street (with rough cobbled causeways) of brown-grey stone houses, crooked and twisted, with door frames and windows awry and shivered. On the left is the church. Near it is the ruin of a strong Norman castle built of stones of the Roman camp in which it stands, and a meadow-length further is Dotheboys Hall, the house made famous for all time by Charles Dickens, in his "Nicholas Nickleby," and the last in the village, if we except one or two half-ruined shanties; and further is the long dreary range of Stainmoor, over which the winds of winter shriek and howl, and phantom sprites wail a mournful dirge, enough to make one's heart shiver with fear. Nearly at the entrance to Bowes, on the east, stands the Unicorn Inn, called into requisition during coaching days. It was in the

yard of this inn that the miserable youths for Dotheboys Hall were set down, although to disguise the exact position of the school Dickens describes it as the inn at Greta bridge. "The Unicorn" is a curious old building, in shape a quadrangle, with its capacious inn-yard open to the street. The entrance to the house from the yard is under a portico. It is a most wonderful old inn, with its maze of rooms, winding passages, dark lobbies and cellars, low beams, and ancient oak panelling, thick walls, recessed windows, half hidden cupboards, and deep window seats, with antique holes and corners, here and there, the former use of which is now forgotten. On the west side of the house is a large kitchen, now the chief room of the family, with mullioned windows, formed of diamond panes of glass, looking into an ancient garden, with its neglected boxwood borders shrivelled into patches. The large tap-room, fitted up with long-settle running into the huge recessed fire-place, shews many interesting features. It is a treat to find oneself benighted, say on a Saturday, at "The Unicorn," and to sit for an hour or two in this old room, and listen to the gossip of the natives and so become acquainted with the items of interest, manners and customs of the people, which appears like reading a page written at least sixty years ago. Behind this room, and arranged so as not to disturb the rest of the house, is a smaller one, fitted up with a bedstead of seventeenth century appearance. There some trusted servant, in old coaching days, always rested overnight, ready should a benighted traveller require necessary refreshments. In the centre of the small window looking into the inn yard, was a hinged pane of glass, to allow the passing of refreshments to those outside; and two or three generations ago quite a thriving trade was done through this little lattice during the night. Martha Railton, the heroine of the "Bowes' tragedy of love," performed the duty of attendant in this room—at least oral tradition says so. Widow



Scene in Coasting Days—("The Unicorn," Towes),

F. Dean.

Railton was the mistress of this inn, in those days known as "The George." It was Martha who died of a broken heart on hearing the passing bell toll, announcing the death of her lover, and a stone at the west end of the church records her never-dying love. "The Unicorn" is now far too large for the present traffic on this road and the declining trade of Bowes. The little snug at the front of the house was the room occupied by Dickens during his stay here. The large dining-room, immediately facing the street, like most of the others, now wears a melancholy air of desertion, and ghosts of a bygone generation seem to flit before the visitor. Even my dreams during those nights I slept at "The Unicorn," were shaped with forms of a bygone people. Sudden gusts of wind moaned dismally round the house and whistled ominously within the numerous crevices of the ancient roof. The old signboard creaked and groaned dismally as it was swayed to and fro by the wind; such sounds produced dreams and phantoms of the past; scenes from "Nicholas Nickleby," "Dotheboys Hall," or anon the merry jokes and cracking of whips, the rattling of coaches, the shrill flourish of the driver's horn, the unloading of baggage, and the alighting of passengers attired in old-world costumes, the hurry and scurry to and fro of postboys and guards in livery. Such are the associations and memories of this wonderful old road-side house, with its savour of past generations clinging around it. The long range of stables, and outhouses, &c., built on two sides of the quadrangle yard prove the importance by which it was held as a hostelry of vast accommodation in coaching times. In the centre of the yard is a large pump that has witnessed very many phases of human experiences.

Pembroke College is indissolubly associated in my memory with Bowes, the reason of this is as follows: A grammar school was founded at Bowes by one William Hutchinson in 1699, when a certain sum of money was left in trust for a scholarship at Pem-



broke College, for the poor youths of the village. Unfortunately, this fund had been allowed to remain in abeyance for a number of years, the reason of which is not far to seek, the money not being sufficient for the full maintenance of the student, and the poor parents of the successful boys not being able to add to the fund out of their scanty earnings, were unable to help their children to avail themselves of the advantages the money was originally intended for; and the Master of Pembroke College having had possession without any use being made of it for such a number of years, wished to retain at least half of it for other purposes than the original trust, and on the Saturday evening during our visit, some twelve years ago, a parish meeting had been called, to consider this action of the College authorities. The curate (formerly a poor Bowes lad), who had reaped the advantages of the trust and knew the benefit of a college career, occupied the chair. All the village—perhaps I should say town, for there are still to be seen the remains of the market-cross—were assembled together at that important meeting; the inn was completely deserted, there was not the faintest sound of a voice in the house or a footstep in the street, until it seemed verily like a place of the dead. At length the silence and solitude reigning around the rambling old inn grew wearisome, and I wended my way up the dark street, lit with one or two flickering oil lamps, to the meeting of the parishioners. The debate was carried on in fine argumentative style, worthy of the object and a great city. At the end there was quite a rush of thirsty orators to “The Unicorn,” where the discussion was still carried on, and a son of Vulcan waxed quite eloquent on the injustice of certain people; and the night had waned into the small hours of the morning ere the landlord, who was an enthusiast on the subject, and my companions on the tramp had fully discussed the pros and cons of the ancient trust. Thus we became acquainted with and interested in the manners and customs of this historic and characteristic old town.

On the south side of the village is Bowes Church, retaining features of late Norman age—two piscinas, and two fonts, one very suggestive of Saxon work. The south transept has mural slabs, a sarcophagus, and relics of Roman and Saxon occupation. Before the restoration of the church all the high-backed family pews bore the names and addresses of the owners, as for instance: John Bousfield (a well-known local name), Christopher Craddock, Archdeacon Headland, Thomas Walker Lowfield, James Langstaff, John Bourne, James Sawyer, all names suggestive of local residents less than a century ago. A small bell turret contains two bells. The



South Doorway, Bowes Church.

south doorway is very interesting, over which is a carved stone, thirteenth century work, illustrating the Crucifixion. Immediately under the west end is a headstone, to the memory of Edwin and Emma, erected by Dr. Dinsdale in 1848. The pathetic story is well told in the ballad: Emma's mother, be it not forgotten, was the widow Railton, landlady of "The Unicorn."

Roger Wrightson, junr., and Martha Railton,  
     both of Bowes,  
     Both in one grave.  
     He died in a fever,  
 and, upon tolling his passing-bell, she cry'd out—  
     "My heart is broke,"  
 and in a few hours expir'd purely thro' Love,  
     March 15, 1714-15.

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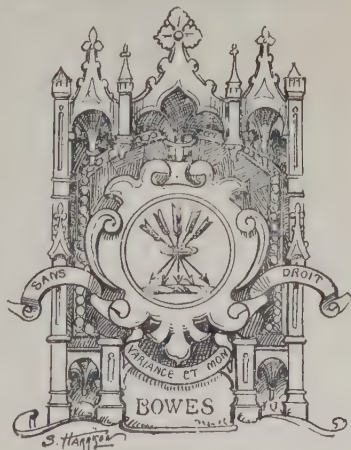
Such is the brief and touching record  
 contained in the parish register of burials.  
     It has been handed down  
 by unvarying tradition that the grave  
     was at the west end of the church,  
     directly beneath the bells.

A few paces westward from the church are the remains of a strong Norman fortress. It was built by Alan of Brittany, Earl of Richmond. The ruined walls are of immense thickness, and stand on a height nearly a 1,000 feet above sea level. Of old the earls of Richmond were always seized both of manor and castle, levying a through toll, and they had a Gallows-tree here. Later, they enjoyed some singular privileges—"the inhabitants of Bowes were to pay six hens annually for the right of gathering 'eldin' (dry wood) in the forest of Richmond." The castle has suffered much by the corroding tooth of time, but more at the hands of men. It and the camp adjoining, have been a quarry for many a generation: the stone is easy 'to get,' and half the village and its out-buildings have been literally raised out of the castle. This strong

fortress stands within the vallum of the Roman station, Lavatrœ, where the remains of an aqueduct and baths can still be traced ; the Romans were in possession here over three hundred years. Between the late Roman era in England, say mid fifth century, and the Norman Conquest—nigh six hundred years—the history of Bowes is a blank, although doubtless the old Celts (Britons) held this moorland waste sturdily for centuries, only to be, step by step, dis-possessed and driven west.

The Roman station was of great strategic importance ; by its position it was meant to guard the low-level ‘ pass ’ to the west, over Stanemoor, and was also in direct road connexion with every other great ‘ camp ’ in the north. The inscriptions on altars found chronicle three cohorts as having been stationed here at different times—the 4th cohort of Frisians, the 1st cohort of Thracians and a cavalry cohort of the Nettones. The camp was spacious, and naturally strong, the southern vallum on the brink of a declivity moated by the river Greta, anciently, says Camden, called the Laver. The castle, the church, and the modern village are all within the vallum of the camp. Tesserae, pottery, and Samian ware, altars and tombs, have at various times been unearthed, and six massive gold links, which had been joined to form a torque of some Celtic prince, were found in 1850, the weight of metal being 19-ozs. 11-grs.

Now we are at Dotheboys Hall again—to find the place much as Dickens depicted it: a cold greystone stark house, its front



The Crest.

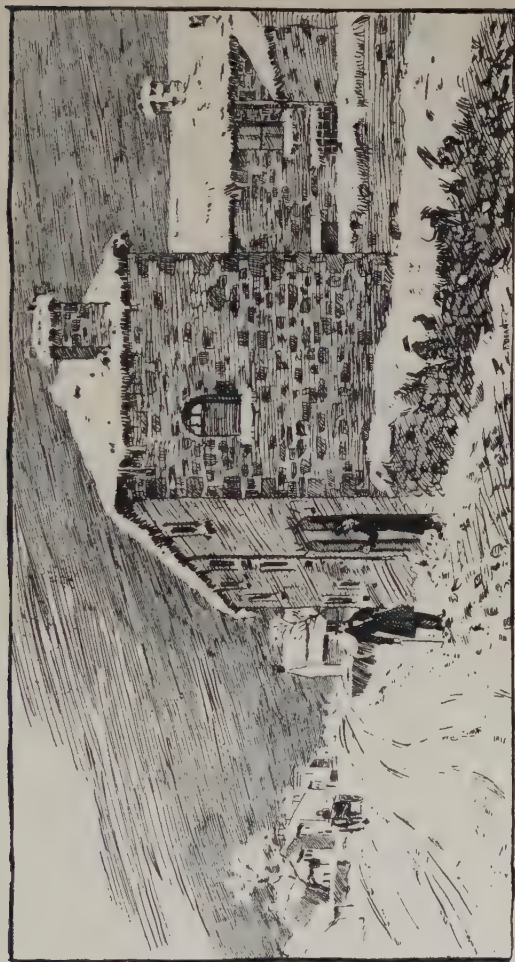
windows looking on to the ruined castle; the play-yard, outbuildings, school and dormitories at the back, and the old 'pump'—indispensable in pre water-works days—are one and all still there.

A daughter of Squeers' lived there on our former visit. The present tenants are slightly related to Mr. Shaw, the "master," but by their manners to strangers evidently resent the notoriety given to the place by Dickens. On our last visit an old lady summarily sentenced us to the outer ways for merely gazing curiously through the archway on to the—Pump! the pump whereat Smike abluted; 'shooing' us away as one might fowls from a doorstep!

At the doors of the yard Mr. Squeers met Nicholas Nickleby. The wind was howling over the moor. "Come in!" says he. "The wind blows in at the door fit to knock a man off his legs." A true remark; but the breezes of Stainmoor are invigorating. We are under the impression that Dickens, in his description of Dotheboys Hall, must have been somewhat misinformed as to the manner in which that now notorious place was then conducted, for we have it on the authority of an old pupil there, Mr. Lloyd, that the place was well conducted and the house kept extremely clean. The food was good, and the boys had as much as they could eat. There was no such thing as a Smike to be seen there, and there was less punishment than in any other school. Mr. Shaw is said to have been a very kind master, and wonderfully attentive to any pupil who was ill. There were schools in the district which would better resemble Dickens' description than the one presided over by Mr. Shaw.

It is only fifteen miles across the moor to Kirkby Stephen or Brough by winding Greta and white road. Let the tired city-man, by way of change, take our advice, and he will find how much refreshed he is for the stroll and the inhaling of the moorland breeze.





Dotheboys Hall, Bowes.

{ E. Dean

The wind was blowing furiously when we started, and an old native remarked to us that the outlook was "rather raffy." Stainmoor is a vast expanse of stunted grass and heather, dreary enough when the storm-clouds of winter sweep dark and scowling, and the winds screech and moan like evil spirits. But when the heather is purple and gold, and the sky above is blue, and light fleecy clouds trail their shadows across the sunlight, and the larks sing sweetly in the heavens, and the becks, tinged with their moorland baptism in peat, splash and trail in sinuous course onwards—the scene is then extremely beautiful.

This great military road of the Romans, and the Northmen of a later period ran, as it does to-day, unswervingly straight over Stainmoor. Near the centre of this high tableland is the boundary of the counties of Westmoreland and York, and up to the twelfth century was the dividing line between England and Scotland, and in old days was the resort of savage and lawless men, and, even down to the eighteenth century, the rendezvous of highwaymen and robbers.

God's Bridge, a natural rock which spans the Greta, is a few hundred yards to the south of the road, is an arch in the tabular limestone, sixteen feet in space, the Greta pouring its water through it to be lost, like the Nidderdale streams, in subterranean passages for a good distance. At Spittal-on-the-Moor there was formerly an inn, a place where the stage-coach changed horses, and passengers alighted for refreshments, and the scene early in the present century of a strange attempt at robbery; besides conveyance of merchandise was chiefly by the means of pack-horses, strings of 50 or even more crossed and re-crossed Stainmoor from Lancaster and Kendal, *en route* for Darlington, &c., and made this a halting place. This hostel, of coaching and pack horse days, was no doubt built on the site of an ancient house of entertainment in monkish times, presided over by some holy man, probably a

Knight Templar, who, apart from attending to the wants of the inner man, could give spiritual advice and perform other religious duties.

### THE HAND OF GLORY FAITH.

BEFORE quitting Stainmoor a word should be said about the "Hand of Glory" superstition, one to be traced back in this country and the North of England especially (although Scott in *The Antiquary* brings it forward as "foreign") to the monks who used it—the Hand—as a spell to conceal or render Treasure invisible. The "Hand of Glory" is *the hand* of a man who has been hanged in chains upon a gibbet, prepared—preserved, pickled, semi-embalmed—in the manner of a ham. The hand had to be wrapped in a cloth—part of a "winding sheet"—and squeezed of any blood in the veins, then put in an earthen pot with pickling spices and saltpetre, powdered. It must have remained a fortnight in this pickle, then exposed to the sun in "the Dog Days" (the hot weather when dogs were allowed to roam unfettered to keep them from canine madness) till completely mummified! If not hot weather oven-dry with vervain (a herb the monks introduced into England with many other plants) and bracken. A candle had next to be made with a pith-wick, the fat of the hanged man, 'virgin' wax, and mustard oil. The dried shrivelled hand had to have this candle fixed in its fingers and lighted: now the charm will work—"wherever one goes with this contrivance" (says Planey in his *Infernal Dictionary*) "those it approaches are rendered incapable of motion, as though they were dead."

The Stainmoor variant of this horrific medium of incantation has its humorous element. About 1790 odd (date uncertain), a man dressed in woman's clothes applied at the Old Spital Inn on Bowes Moor for a night's lodgings, but having to "depart early," asked that breakfast might be put on the table and the inmates retire. All did so but a serving maid, who, lying down on the kitchen long-settle, feigned to sleep. The traveller produced a hand, fitted a candle to it, and waved them before the girl's face, saying, "Let those who sleep, sleep; those who are awake, be awake." The man, then thinking all clear, put the light on the table, and opened the inn door to whistle to his confederates in the planned robbery. The girl noiselessly following, pushed the man

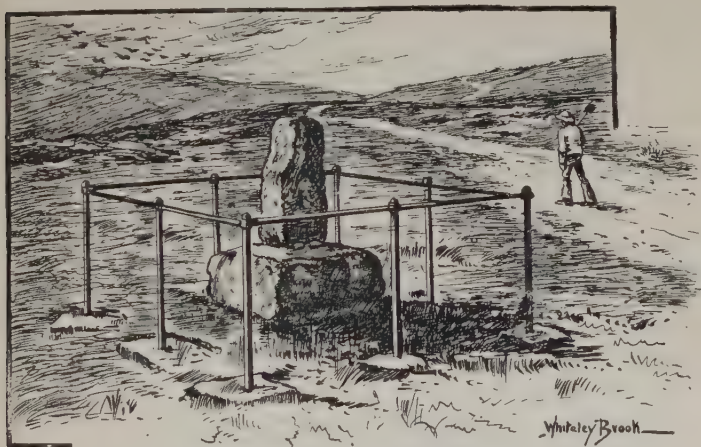
outside and quickly shut and bolted the door; she then seized a bowl of skim-milk and dowsed hand and candle with it, and awoke the sleepers *without difficulty* now the light was out! The landlord's son parleyed from an upper window for them to begone, the men insisting that the hand be restored to them. The son refused, fired off a blunderbuss among them, which must (story says) have not blundered in its aim, for in the daylight stains of blood were traced on the road a considerable distance. The story has curious points—the *merit* of the hand of glory-light, be it noted, lay in the (misplaced) faith of the user, not in the thing itself; as, indeed, we may add as a tag or moral, all sorts of medicines owe to belief in them for their efficaciousness. Northumbrian and Scotch versions vary, but all agree in this particular of *personal faith* in the means used to the end, be that end a splendid or a sorry one. The superstition is world-widely spread. Southey's "Thalaba" attributes similar fetishism to thieves in Mexico! The servant-girl's daughter was living in the 'sixties, and told the story more than once to the folk-lorists of the time.

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Situated on the highest range of this table-land is the Roi, or Rere Cross, as it is commonly called. It was here, after centuries of bitter warfare, that the kings of England and Scotland met to decide the boundary of the two kingdoms, and so raised this, the "Cross of Kings," on which were engraven the images of the two monarchs; and here it still stands amidst the wild waste of encircling hills has endured the howling storms and hurricanes of eight hundred years, which have long since erased the images of the founders; a relic of the old world, though shorn of its former size, it still marks an historic deed, and as we stand meditating before it we almost catch an echo of the old border warfare.

We are now on the ridge of the Pennine range, the backbone of England; and from here the scenes viewed are of the most

varied and magnificent description. Away to the west spreads the beautiful vale of the Eden, with the mountains of Lakeland rising boldly forth in the background ; to the south-west we look across the nine standards Rigg, High seat, Mallerstang, and beyond looms, savage and dark, Wild Boar Fell, and to the east are the moors of North York, stretching far away between the vales of the Tees and the Swale ; to the south the Sleightholme beck traverses the dark waste of Stanemoor before joining the Greta.



Stainmoor—Rere or Roi Cross.

The following is a description of Stainmoor written by Sir Daniel Fleming, over 200 years ago:—"Here beginneth to rise that high, hilly, and solitary country, exposed to wind and rain, which because it is stony is called in our native language Stane-moor ; over which is a great (but no good) road, the post passing twice every week betwixt Burgh and Bowes, and coaches going often that way, though with some difficulty and hazard of overturning. All here round about is nothing but a wild desert,



unless it be the homely hostelry or inn in the midst thereof, called 'Spittle-on-Stanemoor,' for to entertain wayfaring people."

We have now reached the western confines of Richmondshire, and are near the source of the Greta, which rises by a few branch rills, coalescing on the surface of Stainmoor forest, from the northern slopes of Water Crag. "Its name," writes Phillips, "goes with the stream which springs near the old British Camp or Rey Cross" on the edge of the moor—which, with the one at Bowes, in the Roman period "held the fort," or passage, east and west. The extremes were twelve miles apart, and the way a main one between eastern and western North Britain. That the intent was to be effective as against a foe is to be inferred from the great strength of the positions at Brough and Bowes. "The line of the country," says Phillips, also "which drained by the Greta deserves attention . . . being the great line of transport (in Glacial Age) of the 'erratic blocks' from the Cumberland Alps towards the eastern part of the island. . . ." These blocks may be traced from their parent mountains of Shap and Carrock across Edenvale to Brough, and (forced up in ice) toward the summit of Stanemoor, on the eastern side to follow radiating lines towards Romalldkirk, Cotherston, Barnard's Castle and Brignal, at all of which places, 'dropt boulders,' all cross-hatched with ice-scratches, may be observed in the river valleys.



The Greta Valley—Stainmoor.

[J. Pratt

## CHAPTER IV.

## OVER THE HILLS FROM BOWES TO GUNNERSIDE.

AT the foot of the Bowes street, and nearly opposite Bowes Hall, where Richard Cobden is said to have been educated (but as he presents a counterpoise to Smike, other schools here claim this distinction), is a pretty winding lane, with the holly-treed bank, which takes one to the Greta that here flows contentedly amid cultivated pastoral. The south bank's slope is crowned by Gilmansby—a village replete with the elements of natural beauty—a flashing stream, a primrosed bank, later to be gayer still with troll flowers and meadow-sweet and 'codlins and cream,' and for crown a wreath of the sylvan silver-barked lady birks and the lead-foil barked 'rowan'—for the metals have their likenesses in the forest, and who has once seen the bole of a Scot's-fir in the sun turn like a shaft of rich hued metal will fully understand he must be far from the sooty smokefall of great towns, in the pure air of the country, to witness the masque (or pageant) of the Trees' Kingdom.

The garden of Gilmonby Hall was formerly the village green "Shame!" Shall we whisper the story as told? This was filched from the poor for a 'garden' simply because, like Naboth's vineyard, it was 'convenient.' An old man whom we met told of *his* father's cottage which formerly stood on the fringe of the green, and how bonny a scene it was when the bairnies went a-scamper across it.

Here a lane to the right (the west) leads to Tan Hill, quite seven miles away, but from whence the 'crow coal' was fetched in days when fuel hunger was more pressing than now.

Following the moor-way to Arkendale, at a fork in the track we get a fine distinctive view, shewing clearly the commanding situation of Bowes Castle and Roman Camp, the former frowning from its moorland plateau (furrowed by the Greta and other streams), much as the Rhine castles tower above and overlook the German champaign. As far as eye can discern anything clearly, is a rolling expanse of stony moor, laced by the vagrom turnings



The Greta, near Gilmonby.

[*Edmund Bogg*]

of the Greta, a grey isolated homestead here and there only intensifying the impression of stony barrenness. In the east distance, a gradually rising cliff ridge runs from Gilmonby to Gilmanscar, a prominent upjut of ashen gleaming mountain-limestone, which extends for a mile or so at an altitude of 800 feet towards Brignal's wooded banks, which are visible beyond it from where we stand. From this by-road a pleasant green path leads over the moor edge to Spanham, a lonely farmhouse some three to

four miles south-east of Bowes, tenanted by a most hospitably natured family, naturally glad enough of the opportunity of speech with visitors from the busier world. The farmer, also a game-keeper, shewed us a number of preserved skins of *white* moles which abound here.

In passing, one may wonder and speculate on the reason why these albino specimens of a normally dark brown-furred burrower living mainly in the dark and with small eyes, should be so much commoner in sterile white limestone regions of the uplands than in the loamy deep-earthed lower cultivated lands. Is it something in the soil, or the semi-alpine austerity of the atmospheric conditions, such as tend to produce *white* blossoms in wild flowers naturally blue or red? The stoats and foxes of alpine lands are white, and birds like the ptarmigan, rock-grouse, buntings, and blackbirds, tend more or less to be white-feathered in winter and high latitudes. This, however, is a digression.

From Spanham across the knee-deep dull purple heather, we strike the Stang road and note a brace of 'black' game, black cock and hen, which rise with a whirr of wings; also a flock of whistling plovers, a scimitar-billed curlew, and the pretty high-voiced pee-wees that resent our invasion of their preserves with circling loops of flight and shrill protestating wails.

We are now on the dividing water-shedding ridge or line which decides whether springs and rills shall flow down into Tees or into Swale. The heights beyond Arkle beck come into view—a delicate pearly-grey in hue, due to the sun-steeped hazy atmosphere. Now over west moor, we drop down by the out-of-use lead mine there, with a large overshot aqueduct served; and then drop down into the richly wooded stretch of Arkle valley at Askeleth—water barn—where the becks are gathering together, a leash of waters, broad and swift and clear as rock crystal.

From here after refreshment at the "C.B. Inn," already mentioned, we climb over the east gable of Great Pinseat (1,914 feet), seeing, from this wild moorland height, the road in front of Calvey—a round-headed almost insular hill that forms such a fine background to Reeth when seen from the east. The road to Redmire winds across the moors from Grinton—we see it from here as on a map; and the picture is filled in by the distant hill line, crags and wood alike, toned down into mysterious shadow washes. The nearer hills are a dull purple, green pitched where no ling lies, with gashes of rocky gullies, nature riven by storm-waters in ages long ago, or made by man in mining or quarrying.

Now again trending a little to the west we descend upon "t' aud Gang mines," four miles north-east of Gunnerside: a long



A Mountain Stream.



out-of-the-way tramp, but one well worth taking since it leaves a satisfaction something akin to that of the "Village Blacksmith's completed task :

"Something accomplished, something done,  
Has earned a night's repose."

### THE SWALEDALE MINES.

THIS mine lies four miles to the north-east of Gunnerside, and is called the old 'Band' or old 'Gang.' We are struck by the primitive rakish elevation of the ground. The mine galleries are below, but the surface works have a character all their own, as unlike a coal-pit with its wheel and cage and engine-house as can be. The long slim smoke-shaft or arched tunnel runs up the face of the hill. There is a very long low shed, with a thatched roof, this being the peat-house where the fuel has to be stored, since it can only be dug out—with cutting spades for the purpose—at certain seasons. The shed was built large enough to contain a whole year's supply.

This is probably one of the oldest mines in Swaledale, and has been the most profitable. Forty years ago nearly 400 were employed here, dwelling, for the most part, at Gunnerside, Healaugh and Reeth. They had thus to walk from six to ten miles daily to and from their underground labour. Three or four men do all the work required here at present! What a falling off, but such is the great change which has come over the industry in Swaledale. Aged men, not always decrepit and infirm from mine-asthma (due to candle smoke and confined air), still speak affectionately however of "t'owd Gang"—the old Gang Mine. One veteran shewed by his remarks how long and enforced communion with the wild moor slopes and familiarity with the bowels of the earth does not breed either fear or dislike, but the reverse; he said to the writer, "A've wrowt at t'owd Gang for sixty-three years, an' i' mah taime

t'lead wor twent-six pund a ton; an' there's bin as mooch as £60,000 profit meade in a year bi six shareholders, and thet efter beaan wrowt for two thoosand years!" and he added vehemently, as with pride in a possession, "It's nean warked oot, nut it, ah can tell ya. Theer's plenty a' lead in t'oade maane yit." Here the old miner fell into soliloquy, muttering "Ay, it's a gran' spot is t'owd Gang—it is an' all." It was this same old fellow who was taken to London some years ago as a witness in a trial in the High Courts over "shooting rights," and to our question how he liked London and its sights, he replied, to our surprise, "Ah reckon nowt o' Lunnon. They're only pup-heads there, spanking and sparkling aboot; noo gi' me my oane natteral heather aboot t'owd Gang, an' Melbecks moor i' me oane native country, wheer ah wor born an' am well kenn'd." The genuine note sounded there, "my foot upon my native heath" as true for the York dalesman as his Caledonia for the Scot.

But, in verity, these cragg'd hill slopes of 'Yoredale' upper limestones, layered and veined with lodes and 'riders,' are an Aladdin's cave of sparkling wealth, only for the fact that the treasure runs and branches untapped or unrifled are year by year only to be 'won' at deeper and deeper points, running away with the profit through the extra labour required. Old Gang has yielded immensely in the past, and there doubtless remains incalculable store of metal were the toil of delving and cartage to the far-away railway station not so great.

When burial in woollen cloth was enforced by Law, a Warrant, now in the possession of John Barker, of Reeth, tells of one Adam Barker, of 'Level' House, near Old Gang, having infringed the Act by interring his daughter in *linen*! The Warrant, to the Overseers of the Parish of Grinton, reports:

"Whereas information has been given to me by Ralph Elliot, of Healey, that Ann Barker, daughter of Adam Barker, of Level House, near the Old

Gang, was buried in Linnen contrary to the statute—These are therefore to Will and Require you to levey upon the goods and chattels of the said Adam Barker the sum of five pounds, half whereof is to be distributed amongst the poor of the said Parish wherein the said Ann Barker dyed, and the other half to be given to Ralph Elliot the informer.”

Then follows the ominous rider—“Faile not at your perill. Given under my hand and seal, May Second, in the year of our Lord God, 1692—JOHN HUTTON.” There remains the evil scent of narrow-mindedness and self-interest about this “human document” of the far-away past.

Let us now track north-west some two miles, to Blakethwaite, and drop down to Gunnerside Gill by Blakethwaite mines. Behind us, north-east, is great Pin-seat, almost attaining 2,000 feet. Full west of us rises Rogan’s Seat, 2,204 feet, and still more to the north Water Crag, 2,188 feet, the hill-knot of high ‘wham’ and morass from whence more water courses have their spring and race down, than almost any other square mile of ground in the county. It is well named Water Crag—the landmark, and the high water-mark as it were, of Northern Richmondshire ’twixt Tees and Swale. Hereabouts the gill is deeply scored with stony furrows and wrinkles, the effect of water-spates, of wild rain-sweeping tornadoes, and the driving snow storms of a thousand winters! It has desolation and ruin carved in the runes of tempest on its monument of Earth, but to day, in early Spring, it is bathed in golden light, and reveals a galaxy of colour, and outline of exquisitely beautiful curve and contour, modulated and toned to further beauty by the olive green and ruby cloak of ‘sheep’s-bent’ and ‘moss-crop,’ and emerald plant growth of all sorts. Scarred still, the impression now is no longer one of unrelieved violence of forces—the beauty and the hope of renewed Youth is, for the time, on its features. The beauteous hues on the limestone rock, new life in metallic green over-running the

mildew of dead lichen are everywhere noticeable. The scar faces scintillate like mother-of-pearl in the brilliant sunlight. The changing tones, light to dark, on the veil of the sunshot haze fade off into the precious purple of the distance. The last year's brake-ferns' fans are so much rich orange or umber, and the yellow ochres of the withering rushes in the wet places of the sunny hill-slope's greens harmonise in a marvellous way with the surrounding hues of ling and rock and sky that caps each topmost and furthest line of ridge or fell-peak. It is Nature's embroidery we look upon; lace-like green lines of tracery on dull purple velvet—the ground work of the heather clad swells—the arabesque of earth. On the sky-lines of scars or brows, black-faced sheep are here and there silhouetted sharply grey against cloudless turquoise blue.

We climb still higher into the ampler air of Nature's own solitude, and note the outward signs of the hidden inner mineral wealth of these regions, as "real as those on Afric's golden strands." We have before us, in the middle of 'spoil-heaps,' the evidence that mutely tells the story of the toil and moil of centuries, the sweating brows, and the dusty tired limbs of generations of stalwart dalesmen, whose strenuous working daylight hours were passed here, below in the dark. After "life's fitful fever," tho' healthier, less fitful and simpler than Shakespeare's lines infer, they have returned to the earth, and sleep by the sounding Swale at Muker, Gunnerside, and Grinton. Forward and upward still, over alternating rises and falls of rich purple heatherbed or whammy hollow, getting momentarily new glimpses of wild nature, each 'picture' framed in peat-sand or ling-clad bank, a cameo in itself! And now we have passed the limestone; the crust of the earth seen in the gill-side scars, as well as the surface boulders and edges, is all of a sandstone composition, the millstone grit of geologists. The pictures and the scene is different. We reach to the great turbary or peatfield of Wham

bottom. Wham is virtually the same word as swamp, and in our north-country Saxon means a morass or peat-bog. To cross a stretch of peat deposit, intersected as it is by wide and deep trenches (eroded by water) and cut down to the silver-sand bed on which was deposited the peat, here composed of ling wire and saugh twigs, birk branches and the original forest 'hagg' which ages back indubitably covered these treeless wastes—to cross this needs some shew of agility and some athletic powers. At length, after wearisome bounds, we reach the summit of Water Crag, and from its topmost cairn, or 'man' of stones, "a great Lone Land" indeed lies in a billowy far-reaching panorama around us. Northwards, first, we gaze out over the wide peaty slack or shallow hollow of Sleightholme beck and Stanemoor forest, and in the far distance the wall-like precipices of the south to east flanks of Mickelfell, rising to 2,591 feet, background the expanse. To the east our eye can trace and follow the infant windings of the Arkle beck, yet not quite an infant, for the Arkle drains a great tract by its fan-like tributary streams, down as far as the green mead islands of Eskeleth and the hill spurs about Hurst. But when the atmospheric conditions are favourable (after long rain) nearly the whole breadth of England from sea to sea comes within vision. Gilbert Baker says, "from here we look northward over a broadly undulated hollow with Kelton fell and Mickle (which means much or big) fell in the background, so wild and dreary that the passing trains look strangely out of place, and the two Spitals at the upper part of Greta dale shine out like green oases in a desert of brown moor."

On the extreme westerly end of Water Crag, looking towards Tan Hill, are a number of huge rocks, and on the very apex of the largest is a perfect basin of Nature's own fashioning, a Stoup for Holy water of the skies, untainted with any impurity of smoke, and fit for an acolyte to perform his sacred rites. It has taken



long long time to make, but was formed by the myriad gyrations of a quartz pebble (the gritstone contains a many such embedded in its structure) through the aerial torments of many a thousand storms.

The lone hostel at Tan Hill is under two miles from Water Crag. It is 1,727 feet above sea level, and the highest placed, loneliest inn in England. It stands, but for a whitewashed gable porch, plain, gaunt, grey and unlovely externally, on the road line



The Inn, Tan Hill.

of the water-parting between Tees and Swale. Many a weary and benighted traveller has hailed this eyrie haven with as profound delight and thankfulness as any harried being a sanctuary church, the glimmer, tho' of tallow dips only (or later of kerosene lamp) from the window panes of this public refuge, has been as a beacon light to many a traveller; for in days gone by, before the mines were shut up, when chapmen or Scots drovers crossed the wastes by these rough roads on foot or saddleback, the traffic and the necessity for a half-way shelter and food, for man and beast, was much greater than in these days of railway journeying and tourist peregrination.

Not a soul dwells within a radius of three miles of this inn, if we except the inhabitants of the cottage attached; it is in the parish of Bowes, distant eight miles—in fact, it is “six miles from anywhere,” with a place-name appellation. Barras station is that distance, Keld (to the south) a little more. Near by is a seam of coal, the ‘crow coal’ of the upper limestone, and this was for long the source of fire-fuel for several miles around. The coal—of a poor shaly character, burning slowly but keeping alight long—was distributed over the hills in light carts and in bags on pack-horses. One man, Elkanah by name, in days gone by, kept a large drove of donkeys for this purpose.

From Water Crag half an hour’s exertion (one can hardly call it a walk), over peat fields (crevassed snow-fields in winter) and through knee-deep ling, will take one to the summit of Rogan’s Seat, of even higher altitude but not so interesting as the Crag eminence and source of so much water as to have given it its name. These two heights, arising out of a plateau of mountain earth, with Nine Standards Rigg or Ridge, and the Fell of Great Shunnor (Pagan God) lying between Swaledale head and Wensleydale, we might designate, without much inappropriateness, as the nest-hollow of the Swale, or as the cradle of the clouds that give life. At least one-tenth part of all this north-west corner of Richmondshire lies within the ‘arctic zone’ of meteorologists, that is as regards mean low temperature, high rainfall, and the scanty hardy character of its vegetation. The great rainfall around these catchment peaks—Water Crag and Rogan’s Seat—condensing the cloud vapour into liquid rain, accounts for the source of so many of the streams which give beauty and variety to the district, voiceful as they are in ebb or flow, and in hue crystal clear or golden-amber dyed with the tincture of the heath turbaries.

The vegetation is legion as to individuals, but scant as to number of species. Square miles of ling; some bell-heather, whose

the effect of light and colour : the river in spate drums and roars, and the sound carries further for and through the mist. Strange shadows sweep mysteriously over this hill crest or that, threaten ominously, and yet suddenly shift away : whilst the invisible wind wails or pours forth what turns to a musical note as it finds its way through the fir trees filling the sheltered gills or glens. To the eye every crevice of a scar, every rut of a pasture becomes a thing of life, of quick-silver, and running down joins other rills till they become a musical torrent too, of importance for their brief hour ; sweeping everything in the way before it that is small enough to be moved and carried away—living or dead matters not to its mighty mindless purposeless force—into its remorseless maw. So does Swale rave and roar in spate. And the Spirit of the Mountains seems to be abroad too, overlooking, directing the wild furious waste of the waters with the ban and threat of the master in brute force. It is terrible but inexpressibly grand. Such is the time to visit and fully understand the character of the valley, its magnetic moods and phases, which have left their indelible impress on the dale and the people whose lives are spent in it.

## CHAPTER V.

## GUNNERSIDE.

THE dissyllable of this place-name springs from the Norse 'Gunnr,' which means battle or strife, adopted as a proper name. Gunner is one of the great heroes described in the Scandinavian Sagas ; and in his personality as in that of all the Norwegian heroes, we find all that courage, manliness and defiance of death can bestow upon a mortal.

The village itself, stern and weather beaten in aspect, partakes of the character and appearance of some cleveland sea village resting, or rather hanging, like a cornice of stone on to the lower tiers or frontage of the beetling fells, almost as if thrown there at random, at a point where the valley of the Swale narrows considerably, and where a beck brawls, and in storm-times leaps and rushes down a romantic gorge of stern ruggedness, fed and incited to violence by the numerous streams which issue from the south and east sides of Rogan's Seat and Water Crag, and, joining forces, is a furious rapid all the way. On the south of the village the Swale passes beneath Gunner brig, and lashes the scarp, which here rises precipitously. The bridge is a strong structure of two arches, built some dozen years ago to replace one swept away by "the great flood" of January, 1890. The rush and power of the Swale in spate is here tremendous ; at times it will sweep away every obstacle, rolling ton-weight boulders as if marbles, and dumping on the land along its bank with thousands of tons weight of debris. The fall of the Swale from Keld to Richmond averages 34 feet per mile.

Yet a charming village is this—a stronghold as characteristic of the fell-land in which it is set as the old Scanian hero Gunner, whose cognomen it bears; north and west of it the huge green side or grey-brown fell slope rise like the flanks of some 'Titanic animal upwards and backwards to Blakethwaite and Ivelet (that means forked) beck, an upland of outlandish beauty, strangely impressive.



Gunnerside, looking West.

[Owen Bowen

Yes! 'Gunner's-side' is characteristic, gaunt, grey, grim, hard-featured, but a place of old time that grows upon one. The grey walls, grey as the hill crags rising above them, crest after crest, tier upon tier, with green-grey slopes intervening, are set at every angle along the stream bank and higher up on terraces, or let in as it were into the upsweeping fell slopes. As yet the place



has escaped the hasty hand of the modern jerry-builder, who would plant inartistic incongruous brick buildings on the ruins of Pompeii or Babylon itself.

No! Gunnerside is as yet unaltered, unspoilt, in the primitive beauty that is all its own. The beck bridge, with the village grouped about it, is the hub or pivot of the scene, the gossip ground where the dalesfolk gather and linger makes a complete picture, and one full of light when the sunshine is upon it, as full of awful warning and threat when the skies are "of lead" with the hills, and the north-wester winds its horn of wail or requiem, or the ruder blasts of Boreas shoot sheets of hail across it. The picture is eloquent too, if one of human kind is, peradventure, in it: a shepherd home-driving his flock of 'yowes' through the street; or an old dalesman leaning heavily on his stick against the wind, after four score years experience of it, here, 'early and late,' as they say (though what would be late for him would be early enough in the towns of the busy plain) in "Owd Gang"; or, yet again, a lad of sturdy youth astride a rough-coated galloway driving cows to pasture, or a bowed figure with a can of milk strapped upon his shoulders. Such vignettes always give finish and add the touch of human interest to the scene.

Here are two inns—the "Miners' Arms" and the "King's Head," which should perhaps have been mentioned first, as it is long established, and quite a noted 'house of call' by reason of the kind-hearted landlady, Mrs. Shaw, who is an excellent hostess and caterer. Apart from the licensed premises she has other accommodation at Troutbeck House. Many notable people have stayed at the "King's Head," and Mrs. Shaw is one of the characters in Beatrice Harraden's story of *The Fowler*. In by-gone times at the east end of the bridge a chain barred the way between Lodge green on the east of the stream, and Gunnerside on

the west. The local version has it, that from the fact of sportsmen passing over it of necessity, with their guns, on to the 'side' where the deer roamed, the name of Gunner's-side came into use: the north of Swale west of the village being the side of the gunners. This bit of etymology may be taken for what it is worth.



George Reynoldson, one of the "Old Gang" Miners. [Ernest Forbes

Among the 'originals' who now live only in the memories of the old, is Awd Deborah Metcalf, and Awd Helkanah the coal dealer, who kept donkeys (pack-beasts) to carry coal from Tan

Hill to the dale villages ; and whose custom it was to blow a mighty blast on his horn to apprise the far-apart farm-folk and 'gaarders' (*gaard* is still Norse for a farm dwelling) of the villages of his approach. Another interesting 'old habitant' is George Reynoldson, now in his 83rd year, who began work at the age of ten as a miner at "T'awd Gang" mine, wherein he toiled for 63 years. George was summoned to London as a witness in regard to certain Shooting Rights—an action between the Lord of the Manor and the Broderick family, yeomen of Spring End and Summer Lodge. If we remember rightly, the trial ended in favour of the Lord of the Manor, although the Brad-rykes (Brodericks) lineage in the dale dated from, if not before, the Conquest. Another ancient witness was Jimmy Calvert, whose age was 90 years. To some question put by the judge to Reynoldson, anent shooting, he is said to have answered, "Yer honour, it isn't shutting noo-a-days, its on'y modder (murder)! When ah wer a lad, gentlemen used to shut ower points (pointer-dogs)—that's wat a' call spoort. Noo-a-days, t'gents hire men to draave birds tit guns, which is nowt at all but modder." (George clearly proved a tough nut for the London barristers to crack—"no gowk, but real Swaddle." During his cross-examination he replied, hand to ear, "A's varry deaf—ye mun speak up—ah ave already said all at ah noo t' t'other side, an' ye heeard it all, an' a've nowt else to tell ye." To the writer's question, "And what did you think of London?" he made answer, "Ah reckon nowt at all about Lunnon— they're onny pup-heeads there ; it's a faane place eneaf, bud theer's sadly too mich sparkling abaat. Kristle Pallace is a faane place, an' might dea (do) well eneaf. There was lots a portraits of kings and queens" which seems to have pleased the old fellow mightily ; but "the finest place on earth" to George's thinking is Melbecks Moor and T'owd Gang Mines !

Yet another figure of pathetic interest was that of Sarah (the Angel of the Inn), whose mental vision, sad to say, had become wholly impaired. A pitiful sight, indeed, giving pause to all levity from the forceful way in which it pointed the human and



The Angel of Gunnerside.

[Ernest Forbes

divine connexion linking body to soul. The beauteous habitation was there without its holy tenant. Her wondrously striking "raven's-wing" locks, her glossy and long black hair, her darkly liquid almost luminous eyes, without the vital spark of understanding, contrasted with a face whose skin was of ivory delicacy,

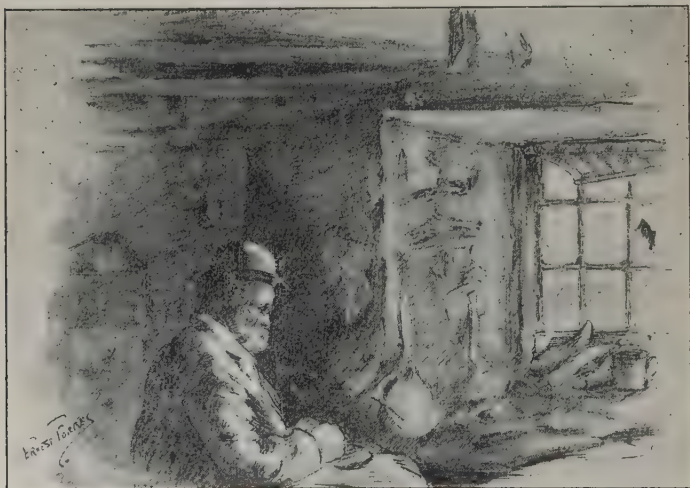
made up a picture of sweet, too sweet, docility over which one might fancy a fairy angel typifying Womanhood weeping, since naught but an infinite pity might be felt for the fair blighted bud. On our first visit—and indeed at subsequent ones—we were strangely impressed by that “vacant chair” of femininity. It was night when we entered the old inn, where the huge banked-up fire allowed deep Rembrandtish shadows to be cast by intervening furniture, and we were barely seated before our attention was rivetted by poor Sarah sitting idly, hands on lap, in meekest pose. She appeared to live in a beautiful spiritual world of which we common mortals could have no conception. Then, suddenly, yet without violence, she would seem to arouse herself from reverie, and commence weaving with her hands and a graceful curve of arms a skein of wondrous imaginary threads: such a pose and play in dumb show as not even the greatest of actors could emulate, such delicacy and grace of movement was there! The ethereal loveliness of the poor girl’s face, her shining lights of eyes that yet shot forth no message beam, her intricate waving of hands, has not even yet been erased from the writer’s memory, though difficult to convey in words. But our attention was suddenly taken from her wonderful shadow play of the invisible skein, and brought back to the work-a-day world by the kind voice of Esther, good woman, conveying the welcome intelligence that our “Supper was laid in the parlour” awaiting that justice being done to it which is the best compliment to pay a good meal.

#### GUNNERSIDE TO KELD.

GUNNERSIDE GILL is an interesting feature of this rock-bound village. We are looking from the bridge on this bright spring morning, listening to the warble of the peat-dyed water laving the rocks and uttering its untutored chant of unfettered existence. On the west bank of the beck is the far-spreading green side,



where children dot the sunlit slope in parti-coloured skirts a-scamper with a like unfettered joy of young life. On the east bank, just up the grey walls and moss-tinted flag roofs, end to side and in divers lines ; here and there a human figure to enhance the life of the picture. Further up the zig-zagged ravine we note the broad channel of the beck strewn with water-worn boulders, telling its tale of tempestuous chutes in seasons of storm ; even



A Noted Cobbler.

[Ernest Forbes

now the beck brawls and frets in chains of grooves and runnels of diverse widths. The gillsides are steep and a glorious golden green in the sunlight—bushes shew as purple patches, hollies glisten darkly, the lambs' tails of the hazel hang from their twigs a pale glistening gold, the 'palms' of the saugh bushes too, gleam yellowly, and the stems of the whitethorn are crusted with silvery grey lichens. There is infinite variety in colour form and details throughout the enamelled rocks and the grey scree laid about in

picturesque confusion : ruin-like yet beautiful. The yellow stars of the coltsfoot show among the heather, and the old-gold or rusty brown of last year's bracken ; a multitudinous point of colour prick out the outlines of everything, alive or dead ; whilst the air is ever full of the croon of water, the babble of infant life, the stressed chant of maturer existence. It leaves its impress on the mind, to return after many days, when the season is changed and the eyes that saw it are afar off in other scenes. Small wonder that the dalesfolk grow up loving their fastness, and think none else is like it.

We leave Gunnerside by the ancient track, north bank of the river, which leads us over the 'stray' to Muker. In this walk we traverse a perfect moorland Arcady, panoramic views all the way, unfolding and closing to reveal yet another scene of beauty at each furlong of our progress. The striking note is the magnificent upward sweep of the side, the ridgeline sharply defined against the sky, now and again a group of kine grazing or resting on the short sweet turf make pleasant vignettes of ease and contentment, giving a sympathetic touch of feeling to the broad sweep of upland. The twisting unfenced fell road is besprinkled with golden flower stars, crowfoot or ragwort, according to the time of year ; and strings of geese, with a long-necked sentinel gander, make the air vocal with their not unpleasing gabble about the laithes and velvety wayside terraced garths ; with the figure of a dalesman or a dalesgirl drawing water from the wayside well adjoining the homestead 'cote.' Such are the gleanings of memory, from more visits than one.

Looking south across the narrowing sinuous valley, we note the finely varied configuration of the hills beyond the Swale. Eastward, down the windings of the river, we see Gunnerside, in the middle distance, bathed in sunshine a burnished grey, the while a rain storm is being driven over the far-away hills, a mysterious witch-like sky warning. Deep below are the dull grey

walls and roofs of an apparently ruined hamlet, Satron, unique in its place-name, whether connected with Saturn or Sceta, it has an aspect of the drear and deserted more than all the villages of this Swale-land.

But during our musings we have reached Ivelet-gill, a beck that comes foaming, leaping and flashing down from the moors above in many a cascade of no great size but witching beauty—a live thing even where only a tinkling trickle—down to Yew-scar falls, whence it threads its way beneath overhanging thickets till near Ivelet, when rounding the shoulder of the hill it fairly flings itself in thrée leaps over steps of limestone rock upwards of one hundred feet down into the valley: a cooling sight to the eye upon a warm summer's day. The prospects from this north bank of upper Swaledale, from Ivelet to Muker, are both varied and satisfying. A high saddle-bridge near Ivelet bestrides the main stream. Oxenhope or Oxnop gill is of some size, it forks, and in its intricate clothing of tree and bush appears ideally picturesque. About it, the moors are scored with lighter brown lines, the bridle paths leading over to Askrigg, Grange Gill, Shaw Cote and Sedbusk, and many another group of cots and farmsteads in Wensleydale.

Three farms on the south side of the Swale opposite Muker, go by the singular name of Rash—in other parts of the country the term Rash connotes a young wood or new plantation. At one of these steadings dwelt a family named Alderson, the mother there living to a good old age: in fact her two sons had passed middle age themselves, and neither had married. When the mother died, in course of years the bachelor couple found themselves in somewhat of a dilemma as regards the domestic drudgery that usually falls to the female on a farm. The younger said to the elder, "John, thoo mun wed"—the retort being, "Nay, nay, *thoo* mun wed!" This shuttlecock sort of argument was kept up for some considerable time, but at length John the elder gave way, remark-

ing, "Ay, if ivver there wor an awkerd job, I allus get it," and so took upon his shoulders the burden of that contract the term of which is comprised in "till death do us part."



Muker from the East.

[Ernest Forbes

But yonder west, right ahead, lies Muker, deep set in the pastureland of the dale. We cross the river by a foot-bridge opposite the south-east end of the great table-tomb-like hill of Kisdon, following a flagged footway through the mowing land of the 'car' over which Swale, and perhaps also its tributary flowing down from Thwaite, has washed in bygone ages until it had deposited the alluvial bed of rich mixed soils which to-day is a fine bay of meadow land, the summer hay and winter fodder of which

is as valuable to the present farmers as it was to the pioneers who were not slow to see the natural advantages of it for a settlement. It is probable, too, that this grand stretch of strath and car gave their settlement its appropriate name, *i.e.*, *Meu-Car*, the Mowing Car (*Mew*, to mow, and *Car*, a marshy flat of fat land). Muker is, or was, a small market town as well as a flourishing mining centre; but when lead became not worth the delving for, the mining population moved away, and so the place dwindled until to-day its irregular groups of dilapidated houses even, with its three inns, wears a rather depressing and forlorn appearance. One can hardly imagine any place more dismal and devoid of comfort than Muker in rainy weather. Yet a short stay here soon dissipates the first unfavourable impression, and smiling faces and kind hearts will become as apparent in "sombre Muker" as in other places. Then one can see with half an eye how the sober grey of the old place harmonises with the encircling hills, and how impressively vast and grand—as if it were some Pyramid—the huge bulk of Kisdon becomes. It might indeed be the funeral mound of some Titanic Cyclops. The best view of the town is to be obtained from the east, either from the Gunnerside road or the moor track over Oxnop as approached from Askrigg. The winding down road glistened in the foreground wet with sleet (on our last visit), and thence curving up over the antique high-backed bridge, the church appears imposing and even artistic. A nearer view dispels this idea, tho' it stands on a commanding site overlooking the beck valley, and about it the clustering grey old-world primitive townlet—one may not write village—perhaps the most compact huddle of dwellings in the dale: a motley conglomeration in stone of walls and roofs, set higgledy-piggledy yet in complete accord with the laws of picturesqueness.

A certain writer bemoans a lack of power of musical expression and feeling in the dalesfolk of this and other adjacent places.



Experience of "German bands" or their like in places abroad must have spoiled the ear of this traveller; we, at any rate, cannot honestly concur in his opinion. Every village from Reeth to Keld has its "band," the fame of whose attainments has spread far beyond the dales, though, we believe, there are those who detect nothing soul stirring in the skirl of the bagpipes. Apart from this, however, here before us is a most antiquated and primitive structure (of which we give a sketch), and over its lintel writ in large and ancient characters, so that even he who runs may read, the magical words "BAND ROOM," probably the smallest and most primitive Hall of Harmony in the kingdom.

As bearing on the notorious love of "Swardal" folk for their home fastnesses, Richard Kearton, in his fine book, "With Nature and a Camera" (page 49), tells how he knew a little girl living high up Swale-side who was compelled to accompany her parents and reside in a Lancashire spinning town. One day some of her relations sent a round of fresh butter to them trapped up in the cooling leaves of the common Dock, whose large foliage tufts grow in plenty



by the stony road and beck-sides from Thwaite to Reeth. "The little girl's heart," he writes, "remained so true to the land of her birth, that she seized one of these (leaves) and cried, 'let me kiss it, mother; it has come from dear old Meucar.'"

Muker formed a part of the old far-reaching parish of Grinton, and until the 16th century the dead from the upper Swale districts had to be conveyed to and buried at the mother church. The Chapel of Ease here was built and dedicated to St. Mary, in 1580; although from frescoes discovered under many a coat of whitewash there appears to have been an earlier place of worship than the one built in 1580. In confirmation of this, there is mention at this place of one Alexander Metcalf, 'chaplain,' in 1500. At the west end of the church is a memorial tablet with an inscription—"To the Glory of God and in Memory of Sistine Washington and Margaret Metcalf, this Church was restored by their son, 1898." The interior is severely plain, and it is, perhaps, the most uninteresting fane in all Richmondshire. The God's-acre contains numerous memorials of Metcalfs, Calverts, Aldersons and Peacocks. The following record has its value as shedding light on the early history of the district, proving as well the extended lineage of most of the family names, whose successors still bear them and live in Muker and round about. It also proves how strenuously the dalesmen of four hundred years ago stood up for the right of 'free Chase':—

"In the year 1500 Sir Ralph Bygod, Knt., Lord of Swaledale forest, claimed against Galfred Metcalf of Mewcre, yeoman; Alexander Metcalf of Mewcre, chaplain; Ralph Milner of Mewcre, yeoman; John Bradryke of Mewcre; Richard, George and John Alderson of Keld, yeomen; Thomas Mawer of Thwayt, yeoman; Christopher Metcalf of Gunnersett, yeoman; Simon Huchensen of Satorne, yeoman; John Wherton of Cawnerd House, and James Milner of the same place, yeomen; for forcibly entering his free chase at Mewcre, Keld, Thwayt and Gunnersett, without his leave or license, hunting therein, and taking many beasts of chase, which they bore away, besides committing other enormities."

Truly this record shews that the 'forest laws' were not strictly observed among the yeomen of the upper Swale; and amongst the offenders is a parson and a Metcalf to boot!



Muker by Moonlight.

[Owen Bowen

Strange to say, every name cited in the above charge by the Bigod Knight is among the most numerous in the dale to-day—all save one, that of Mawer of Thwaite. But where are the great lords, the Bigods and Whartons? Scattered about east and west, here and there—but not one single descendent of their house and name remains in the dale proper! On the other hand, the Metcalfes, Aldersons, Harkers and Hutchinsons are represented by fifty families at least.

In the nearer 'old days,' that is to say, sixty years or so back, very few of the dalespeople got beyond Richmond, Reeth, Hawes or

Kirkby Stephen throughout their lives. The writer was told by an elderly dalesman that during the long winter evenings they visited each other's houses, and,—knitted by candle or rush-light. The younger ones would likewise gather in groups about the ingle; and there would be singing, the women keeping time with their needles, but—as our informant put it—the songs were chiefly of the ‘dowly’ class, all about lasses pining away through unrequited affection, or over a swain who went “to the war,” and (of course) *never* returned; or, peradventure, of women-folk killing their own little Barnies:—

“She made a grave both long and deep,  
An’ put them babbies in to sleep;  
She rubbed the penknife on the grass,  
But more she rubbed, bloodier it was—  
Down by yon’ greenwood side in Yore.”

The stories were mostly of ghosts and fairies, giants, warlocks, etc., until—as the dalesman put it—“we used to get so frettened, ’at we durstn’t leuk behind us when we went hoam o’ dark neets, an’ if anyone by chancy knockt sharply on t’door, we were nearly flayed oot o’ oor wits.”

Judging from the stature of the present representatives of the old dales’ families, there is no sign of racial degeneracy. For example, there is Christopher Metcalf, or “Gurt ‘Kit”—because there are, or were, several lesser Kits—or Christopher Kit (as he is sometimes called), who is a worthy specimen of the clan. His father was known as “Kaister John Kit,” an original character, apt with quaint sayings and a prodigal with snuff. Many of the older dalesmen have an alias or nickname, descriptive or satirical; such as “Matty Joan Ned”; “Cher Dode” is George Kearton, uncle of the now famous Kearton Brothers, whose pen and photo-lens have brought Wild Life on to our room tables through their natural history books; while “Neddy Dick” is Richard Alderson, the musical genius of Keld, and Thomas Metcalf is called “Dicky

Tommy"; and last but not least of a character, the old farmer moor-man living in the lonesome 'gaard' near Shunner fell's northern buttress, is known as "Moor Close Jamie."

There are three inns in Muker, none too many when the mining was a boom, but as Professor Phillips remarked in 1854, "one proper inn" would be preferable and quite sufficient to-day. Up-dale, a publican has other occupations; at Thwaite he is a blacksmith as well as a boniface, or he is a farmer, a mason, or a wheelwright. Good private lodgings, however, are to be had in Muker.

A little west, where the Keld-Thwaite and Cliff gill Buttertubs' becks meet, is a large bank of drift, shingle and sand, and upon it, backed by stately foxgloves, is a magnificent bed of the orange Monkey-flower (*Mimulus Langsdorffii* of Donn). Its history here, as an 'Alien' much more recent than the pioneer Norsemen, is singular enough. Its seeds, and the roots of it, which take hold of the soil at every point, were washed out of the cottage gardens at Thwaite, a mile higher up, Nature transplanted it here, through a great waterspout and storm-flood a few years ago. Its gaping soft orange-throated flowers, inch across, in mass made a glorious splotch of colour in the bed of the beck at this 'meeting of the waters,' contrasting finely with the green leaves of the aquatic water-loving sour-dock, eaten of children under the name of 'green-sauce,' and even given to cows to keep them quiet whilst being milked.

A little west, on the left, another beck goes leaping and flashing athwart the highway road. It has its rise in lonely and barren Cliff gill at the foot of 'Lunersett' or Lovely Seat, running between that mountain mass and the still huger buttressed fell of Great Shunner. Many lovely and cool pictures its mossed banks show, wherein wild-flowers bud and bloom unseen of all but the blue

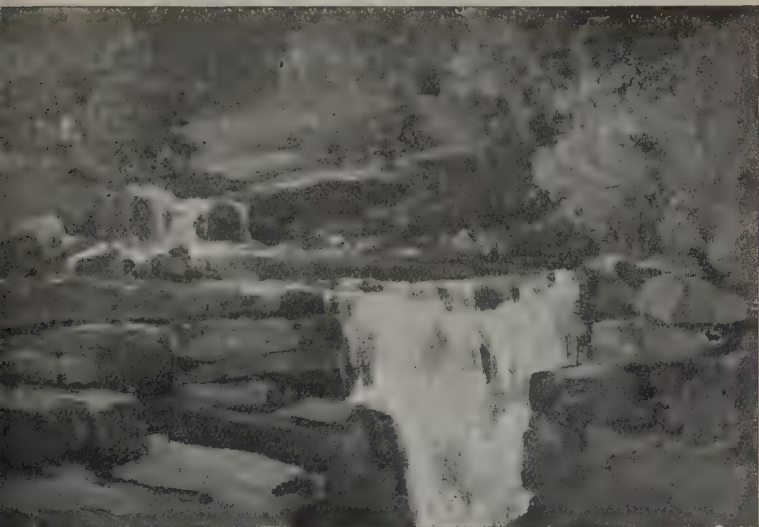


eye of some dalegirl, or some boy a-hunt for wild birds' eggs. Laughing waterfalls entertain rainbows of their own when the sun shines through the spray, and such glimpses of natural faerie land tempt one to linger on a warm summer's day, and lave hands and forehead in delightfully crystal cool "water of life."

Thwaite is less than a mile from Muker, and which we shall visit later. We to-day cross by the footpath to the Swale, follow the windings of the river on the east and north sides of Kisdon upreared like some mighty Celtic barrow to nigh 1,700 feet. This hill is the 'Great Pyramid,' as it were, of upper Swale, dominating the dale in mute solemnity, its huge bulk having from endless ages back baulked Swale water of a direct course and compelled it to swirl and swerve round that mighty base, down a series of steps in the Yoredale limerock of the district that form a chain of fosses, grand beyond description when in spate. Kisdon is of a verity the great natural tomb of extinct life, its limestone strata being full of crushed bivalve shells and Encrinite 'lily' stems that eons ago were alive in an ocean which has ceased to be, yet their entombed remains in the rock tell the story! Kisdon is quite distinct in appearance from the surrounding hills. Sometime in the past it has been an island, the Swale forking (as shewn by the place-name Ivelet, *ivel* meaning a fork) at Keld and flowing around it in two arms. It is almost so to-day, for the Swale proper flows round its north and east base the Angram or Kisdon brook winds in shrunken proportions along its west side to south end, and only a very short brae or haugh of land close to Keld is sufficiently elevated (by the river having cut its way through a later and deeper bed) to make the circle of water incomplete. On the east bank of Swale, opposite Kisdon, the huge bastion wall of Melbecks uprises grandly as we enter this natural retreat, the very heart of the hills ringed round and enclosed in mural scar and craggy steep. The Swale can hardly be called a river until it has made

a crescentic lap around Kisdon and been joined by the Thwaite and other brawling 'becks.' Thence, mile by mile, it grows more and more like Browning's river as it approaches 'the dark Tower' of Edgar's song in "King Lear":—

"Low scrubby alders kneeled down over it,  
In aspect palsied, dwarf, black-catkin'd oaks."



Kisdon Force.

[Owen Bowen]

Between Muker and Swinnergill it flows broadly shallowed over a rock-strewn course, with many a narrow boiling cauldron or grey mare's tail like channel on one side or the other, so many natural goits or strids. The banks being low, the swath land is often inundated to the very foot of the wall of Kisdon. Every yard seems to take one further into some wild virgin land, fit haunt for hill fox, grey wolf or brown bear—so lonesome and awe-inspiring is Nature in her sterner phase here. A strange stillness

reigns, broken now and again, as the condition of the atmosphere carries or obstructs, by the voice of Swale, the splash of water somewhere falls on the ear, or hark! that is the pitiful bleat of some strayed lamb. Far away through the thin air to-day, from the heights of Kisdon comes the call of a shepherd to his collie, and its yelp, yelp in answer. It is witchingly 'fey' this gorge, this mountain-land's throat of stone that gives out such eerie sounds. We are now toiling up the most magnificent scenery of the dale, Swale foaming and leaping downwards through a deep cavernous hollow in the hills. Gaunt and forbidding is the aspect of everything save the live flashing water; a subtle sense of ghostiness and seclusion pervades this place, the lone home of corbie-crow, raven, falcon and buzzard. Down deeply gashed and cloven gills, waters surge in tangled ropes of foam. Nearing Keld the banks grow more irregular and broken by scars, the path winding up through a portion of the old Keld forest. In the sombre light of twilight we see, through gnarled and lichen-crusteds stems of trees garbing the scars, the Swale—old yet ever new, the same to-day as yesterday and for ever—like some snorting war-horse with tawny mane, lashing itself into furied foam on the fang-like jaws of limestone scar as it leaps in mad career through this forest gnome land. Brushwooded fells rise steeply above the lower scar stairways, glowing to the very sky-line that backgrounds them, a sea of colour, greens, greys and russets. It is impossible to depict in words the wondrous loveliness, the dignity and stern grandeur of this length of Swale. The impression of its beauty is stamped for all time on our mind.

To reach Swinnergill from Muker we must cross the Swale by the footbridge some half mile above the village, and then proceed along the east bank under the grand bastion of Melbecks Moor, until we arrive at the mouth of the beck, and then follow up stream for a few hundred yards. It is a rough road owing to the numer-

ous boulders strewn in its channel. There are several cascades, and at the foot of one a cavern (caused maybe by volcanic action), the roofs and sides of which have the appearance of petrified or



Swinnergill Kirk.

[*R. Rodwell*]

lapidary polished mud, deeply scored with indentations made by the trickle of water during countless centuries. The entrance is low, but after a dozen yards or so the rift gets more spacious, and a man can stand upright. Its length is about 50 to 60 yards. The best way to reach the cave is by way of Keld and Crackpot

Hall, and it is locally known by the name of "Swinnergill Kirk." It was used as a secret place of worship during times of persecutions for Faiths. It is most likely that ordinarily meetings for service would be held in the gill near the cave's mouth, for a single lookout posted on the hill slope above would be able to see every enemy and give warning of their approach, when the cave would doubtless be used as a hiding place until danger passed. It has also done service as a Refuge during the aggressive warfare of Celt, Saxon and Norman. The waters of Swinnergill rise on the south side of Rogan's Seat, and the stream has pretty features but the passage is too rough for it to be often followed beyond the cave. From here we make over Hall-out-pasture—a spur of Rogan's Seat overlooking Crackpot hall—which commands fine views of Kisdon and up the river to near its source, and the rich olive pasture upland through which it meanders. Cracket (cracked) Pot Hall (a pot or depression which water has worn in the lime-rock) is a lone 'Gaard' (Norse term yet for a farmstead) sited on a high shelf of the hills, the house, like an eagle's eyrie, is magnificently situated, the view on the approach to it of truly Alpine character. A hall, one time the home of the Knowles' family, it is now a farmstead in the occupation of Kit Calvert. In its place formerly stood the house of the deer-keeper for the great lords of Swaledale in its upper part. On our visit the sight of the primitive kail pot spoke forcibly of bygone days, when it was put bodily upon the stout oaken table, and everyone stood up and served himself to the savoury mess, filling his trencher by the aid of a huge leaden or wooden spoon!

We are now in the Land of Fosses, and the scene from the north side is both striking and magnificent. We glimpse the river far below over a forest-like array of trees and abrupt jagged masses of rock, swathed literally in olive and bice-hued mosses, and spangled with the silver star flowers of the leadworts (*Arenaria*



*verna* in spring, and *A. nodosa* in later summer) and the pert lilac candelabra-like tube flowers of the felwort (*Gentiana Amarella*) in autumn. Nature has indeed been lavish in displaying her charms here; between this sea of colour and white limestone walls the river plunges in seething arrowy flight like a steel sword cutting in two the dale were not its voice suggestive rather of a living force filling the air with its resounding music. Spring, summer, autumn, it is always beautiful, perhaps most sternly so in winter, when huge blocks of ice, like a broken up glacier, hang pendent from the rocks on its banks and nearly close in the water in a transparent tunnel, or cave of Aladdin for sparkling points of light.

Kisdon (from *Kis*, Celtic, little, and *dun*, a detached hill) is so named only in comparison with the vastly bigger bulks of Rogan, Shunor or Nine Standards Rigg. It is of oval configuration with steeply sloping sides, not broken by gill gullies because of the limited area of its gently rounded almost plateau-like summit. It is the Table Mountain of Swaledale.

A little further west we reach East Stones Gill, draining the moorlands above from the western slopes of Rogan's Seat, and its beck falls into the Swale above Kisdon foss. In its upper reaches it has worn itself a deep bed into the moor, and is bare and treeless near its junction with the river; it is beautifully wooded, with the arboreal flora of limestone soils, Rowan-tree scarlet cluster-berried in autumn, nut-trees, hawthorns of great age and weird aspect, ash, oak and juniper. The gill beck jumps down towards its bourne, the river, in a string of lovely cascades. Beldy hill is also on the north bank, 'howe' shaped; it was formerly a lead-mining station. Here, crossing a bridge, we follow the picturesque path to Keld, the very name betokening water. Keld is the highest village in the dale. Builded out of the hills it naturally takes on

the same aspect. Standing high up on the south bank of the here youthful Swale, little to shield it from the fury of the elements, it appears as gaunt, bleak and bleached as the moorland scars which encompass it. No other place, not Aysgarth even, can equal it for river and hill scenery, sternly grand, sublimely beautiful, and even



The Swale and East Stonedale Beck.

[*Owen Bowen*]

to the folk-lore lover's eye, romantic; there is the gloom of mountain form, the picturesque commingling of overhanging wood and precipices. The river at times shrunken deep down in its bed of rock is shadowily seen, mysteriously audible as of a voice from the underworld; the colour of every living and dead thing is so variable—here the misty tender scenic outlinings of a Claude, there the magnificent lowering storm effects of a Turner. Strangely beautiful is this spot when the hills are bathed in sunshine, transfigured! and dark cloud shadows, like ships, pass airily skimming

[Owen Bowen

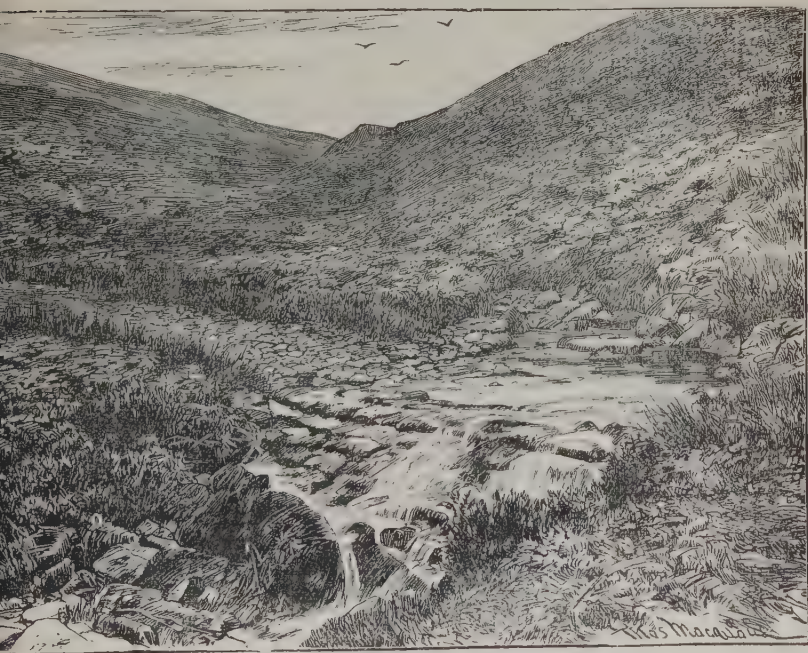
The Swale Valley, near Keld.



over the hills and out of sight ; and to the ear there comes at intervals the distant tinkle, tinkle of a tiny waterfall, the soothing gentle plash of running water. Nor is music lacking at Keld even when the songbirds of summer have long winged their way to milder shades ; and Neddy Dick has laid aside his tinkling bells and singular sounding "stones," the music of untiring Nature never ceases to vibrate on the wings of the air, from the strings of "Eolus harp." The wind wails an intermitting requiem for summer fled through the Scots' firs overhanging the precipice ; and Swale adds its thunderous organ-like notes. One can be lulled to sleep by its croon in fine days, and awed in spirit by its dirge in foul weather. Many a waterfall adds an instrument to the production of the symphony, to rouse us at times to the accrescent roar and velocity of the water sprite's fury during some storm that sounds as though it were the war din of worlds.

Of the ancient history of Keld little is on record. Its name is evidence of its antiquity as a settlement, and round it are signs and vestiges shewing its early occupation, the place giving its name to a family of some estate. In 1307 there is a mention of a William de Keld, who with others were charged by the Earl of Richmond with chasing deer in the new forest and Arkengarth without his leave or license. Besides this, the "Old Keld Chapel" is mentioned by John Leland in 1540, from which it would appear to have been a conventicle pertaining to the Church of England. This chapel seems to have been a ruin late in the 17th century, and was restored in the early years of the 18th as a Calvinistic place of worship. In 1789 it was re-built for use of the Independents, and from that date up to 1837, a period of 48 years, one Edward Stillman, a man of remarkable attainments, was minister. He it was who walked all the way to London and back for "the *sole* purpose of

begging money towards building and enlarging the chapel." He succeeded in his object, coming back with the needful in his pocket, a burthen heavier than he set out with. Strange enough to say—it shews how many friends he called on upon the road—his total expenses, *o.p.*, was only Sixpence ! It is verily the stern solemnity of the surroundings, the adamant hills that rears men of Stillman stamp.



Near the Source of the River,



## CHAPTER VI.

## THE HIGHLANDS OF RICHMONDSHIRE.

FROM Rogan's Seat to Nine Standards Rigg, and round by High Seat to Great Shunnor Fell, is a crescent-like rampart of lofty mountainous ridges, enclosing wide radiating moorland of elevated and dreary character, the birthplace of many river heads, the cloud waters of a vast area of skyland.

Coming down the south-west side of Rogan's Seat we cross the deep gully of East Stonesdale, then over Black Moor to Firth's farm, the highest in the northern watershed of Swale; and from here, looking southwards, we have a far-reaching view of this cradle land of the vasty elements. Having regaled ourselves on good milk and good bread and freshly-churned butter redolent of the sweet green blade of the limestone hill pastures the healthy hardy shorthorn fed upon—an aroma of its own, and like nothing else in creation—we say goodbye to the hospitable farmer's wife and drop into West Stonesdale, over the up-trending mountain road that leads from Swaledale up to Tan Hill, and on over Stainmoor and Sleightholm 'forest' to Bowes. This was a much more frequented highway during the reign of King Lead and his mining gangs, and when the colliery at Tan Hill was the only place in this district (except the crow-coal pit high up Cotter-end buttress of Shunnor) where any fuel for hearthfires besides peat could be obtained. At this period, before rails were laid to Bowes, Barras, Kirkby Stephen and Hawes Junction, coal from the Tan Hill pit was carted to great distances, two days often being required for a

journey there and back. Further along, our faces kept full west, and we arrive at Robert's Seat House—the outlook again impressively extensive, over dark apparently lifeless and deserted peat moors to where uprear Brownber and Coldberg 'edges' and Nine Standards Rigg in lone grandeur. A wild rugged waste, solitude entypified, its tenants at most a few lurking moor-birds



Catrigg Force, Keld.

[Cooke's

or lorn shaggy half-wild sheep. From here we toil perilously onwards knee-deep in wiry ling, scrub, or treacherous black-brown peat to the head of Raven's gill; thence over Slate Pit moss to the head waters of Whitsundale beck. It is a most fatiguing walk; the moss is full of hags, pits and rifts or gullies like the crevasses of a glacier, their depth ten to fifteen feet, and as wide, and in some places only a stride or two of level ground separates them. And yet all this depth of peat, on examination of its layers, shews it to be the remains of dead and gone vegetation; of birch and

pine and nut tree, which no longer grow above 1,200 feet altitude. A mile's walk is as long and as exhausting as four on the level. In vain the eye roves over this sterile region for some pleasing phase of colour or natural feature of beauty. In Whitsundale, we were told, there are "several caves," one named Bryan's being very extensive, but we did not find them.

From here, still struggling onward on *terra infirma*, amid knee-high heather, after two to three miles we arrive at Nine Standards Rigg—romantically named mountain ridge—and the goal of our ambition.

The solemn silence of these 'moss' moors is strangely impressive, intruded on only by the startling alarm note "Cum bak, cum bak" of some muir-cock, or the eerie wail of a curlew's call,\* or the low warning pipe of some golden plover: these, with the dunlin, dotterell and snipe all breed hereabout undisturbed year after year as they have done for centuries and centuries. It is only the raven and the birds of prey, the buzzards, the peregrine and the erne (one spur of Shunnor is called after it) that have grown scarce or extinct through being shot for their sins of Nature.

These moors are best viewed in autumn, when wisps of cloud hang phantom-like here and there, and floating mists confer strange apparition resemblances to this or that outstanding feature of the wilderness of heathery upland. The contrasts to be obtained, particularly at sunset, from Nine Standards Rigg, according to the way we look, are indeed startling. For hours we have been traversing a wild houseless heath, a lone land of gloom; but the instant we set foot on the Rigg top, the summit ridge, and look west, a "Garden of Eden"—the garden of the Eden river—widens out, trending north, a real 'golden valley,' and

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\* The curlew's "call" in Spring is quite distinct from his "cry" in the Autumn.

withal, so beautiful, so transcendently lovely, so suggestive of peace and plenty, of smile and happiness, of good cheer in a happy land; that more than one long gaze is needed to convince one it is not all a dream, a mirage born of the barren void we have toiled through as in some "Pilgrim's Progress"; that it is a reality of earth, not an effect of enchantment or a fabled shore of the imagination.

The setting sun threw a farewell lustre on the 'Lakeland Hills'—a land of bronze-hued forms as of half-upreared mammoths—and diffused a glamorous liquid light, golden and mellow, over the lower-laid amber cornland and emerald pasture slopes of the Eden Vale. The ramparts of the far-away hills were fringed with a burnished line of fire, appearing under the mystic impact as if the frontier or some great wall barrier, marking off one fairy world from some other, their sheer front sharply silhouetted against the sky whence came the slowly diminishing flood of sunlight. Then the whole became subdued into beautiful harmony of tone by the darkling haze of evening. Deep below us, several miles away, are the twinkling points of light at Kirkby Stephen; and the sound of Sabbath bells float gently to our ears, sweetly and faintly on the thin night air, to convey, even to us on this Mount Pisgah of Eden-land, their message that the Hour of Prayer, the Cumbrian 'Angelus,' draws nigh.

Such were the contrasts—bright and dark, gold and gloom, far as the poles asunder—of the eye's guerdon for ascending Nine Standards from the east. To the south and east, a drear tenebrous forbidding desert; to the north and west, an unapproachable far-reaching scene of beauty—the garden of the (English) Eden "flowing with milk and honey." But this is only an excursion—we must keep within the bounds and marches of Swaleland and the Richmondshire border. From here, along the Rigg we follow

that border to Hollow Mill Cross, where a rude pile of stones marks the western boundary of Swaledale, and also demarks the two counties of Westmoreland and Yorkshire. Here rises the main source of the infant Swale, in its first babbling course called the Birkdale beck. The Swale proper begins from where the beck is augmented by the falling into it of the Great Sleddale stream at Lonnin' End, or a little lower by the Whitsundale water. In wet seasons, scores of nameless burns and sikes course down from the crescent slopes of the great hills around the head of Swaleland. One can scarcely adequately express the awe-inspiring solemnity when the threatening shadowy ghost of night settles silently down on this dreary expanse. The silence reigns, it oppresses the senses, it can be 'felt' almost, with, peradventure, not a single speck or spook of light to mark the presence of man. Jack-o'-Lanthorn or Will-o'-the-Wisp are said by scientists to be absent, too, on these high sterile wastes: their luring lamp of natural gas is generated of rotting swamp at lower levels. And truly many parts of this wide stretching desolation have seldom been trodden by the foot of man. At Bow Bridge habitable Swaledale begins. Hoggarth's Farm, the residence of William Kilburn (who, as his name suggests, hails from the Vale of Mowbray), is a lonely 'gaardy' standing near the mouth of Whitsundale beck. Lower down is Cautherley Scar and Hoggarth's Leap. Here is a bridge over Swale into West Stonesdale.

Returning to the Shire boundary stone, we climb High Seat, from which, too, a magnificent view opens on our gaze. Here is a spot traditionally known as Hugh Seat Morville: it was, it is said, a favourite resting place of Sir Hugh de Morville; but this high mount—a peak mounting out of a plateau—is still more famed from a pillar of stones named "Lady's Pillar," and on one of the stones the date 1664 is inscribed and the letters A. P., these being the initials of that famous woman, Lady Annie Clifford,



Countess of Pembroke, Dorset and Montgomery, who would not be bullied either by kings or usurpers. As Lady of the Manor, looking after her rights, she in person "rode the bounds" in the above year. The look out up the Eden valley is so fine as to beggar description: we have said enough—it must be seen to be realised, and once viewed, is never forgotten. We are now very near the source of four rivers: the Eden, the Yore, the Cotter and the Swale. Within a mile or so the land begins in parts, shallow channels in or on the silver sand at the base of the peat, to fall at least in three directions, the primary trickles of the rivers following these, one only (the Eden) to take eventually a course due north. Near the south-east end of High Seat it begins to shape as if bound for the Humber, like its collateral Yore, but after its imprisoned race boiling with rage through the cavernous and crevassed Hell Gill, it bends away north more contentedly, to find its lullaby on the lap of the Solway shore.

From the south end of High Seat we must cross a great swampy hollow—the birth-lap of two rivers—to get upon Great Shunnor Fell. What shall we say of this huge mountain mass, with a Norse-god's name; with buttresses like the spokes of a wheel? It is the hub or nave of the surrounding highland for miles, and the belvedere from its summit is worth the arduous labour of ascent. It is not soon forgotten. No great masses stand in the line of sight to block out Ingleboro and Whernside. As a dalesman remarked, "you may see all t' world from top a Shunner." From here, outlooking every point of the compass alike, one learns the significance of the physique, the making of the frame of York. The whole slough of despond, peat hagg and barren waste comes under survey. East we can see the windings of the Thwaite beck, the precipices of the riven Cliff gill on the west slope of Lunersett, and in perspective the jutting rounding falls of the fells right away down Swaledale to Marske. But apart from the drear and

the forbidding, in this upland world within the Arctic Zone (as regards its vegetation) there is a brighter and more interesting phase, by those who have eyes to see, explained in the following vignette, by Dr. F. Arnold Lees :

#### SWALEHEAD PICTURES OF THE SEASON.

“IN late autumn when the fire-flower of Stonesdale—the rosy purple crag-willowherb—or the Tyrian-dye ling of Sleddale is only a memory, there is still no lack of colour on dead rock over these ample Swale-head mosses, with their ambient clouds ever bending over them, and asperging them with the christening water of life. The fountain moss or the bog-moss spring here, spread there, patch-work quilt fashion, in emerald or bice green, primrose, orange or bright sienna-brown ; the cotton-grass stems in serried thousands glow where the sun-gleam finds them in a hue betwixt wine-red and madder-purple ; and viewed close to, distinct goutts of blood—due to a spot lichen—speckle this face or that of the iron-grey spar-spangled gritrock, in between the green and black-lined maps made by another crust-moss—the *Lecidea geographica*. Other hues lies like skeins of coloured silk where the leashed rills plait their way down stony moor slopes in steep miniature channels, meeting and parting in an embroidery of water, ever spurting and sparkling downwards with the trick of mother-rain, to coalesce below the obstructing stones, themselves shagged with olive seaweed-like moss or ruddied by some liverwort endued by avid thirst with the chemic dyes of rusty rock or corrosive thunder-water from off the peat ; and every flashing force, winter and summer alike, is an example of green and silver foil, crystal amber transparency or opaque umber and sepia tints.

The ‘familiar fleeting amethyst’ of the besom-ling—‘Kid’ in local speech—is braced or knotted with the pale rosy waxen blooms of the cross-leaved Bell-heather, or the fuller magenta-purple of the Grey-heath : each one, and all answering transitory messages of brightness from gulfs of cloud-toss’d sky “with a radiant flower-light” which actually seems a replying smile of thanks ; at any rate it intensifies by flash of contrast the golden-orange or yolk-yellow of the autumn-blossoming French furze, and the bloomy blue-green of the juniper-whin’s needle leaves ! Both furze and juniper are a common feature of the Swale-head slopes and pot-holes, and both of different tint are ever-green.”

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Descending the north-east buttress of Great Shunnor, follow-

ing the downdrop of Thwaite beck—quite a two miles tramp—we reach a lonely ‘gaard’ or homestead—Moor Close, the only dwelling on this side between Thwaite and Mallerstang. It is the lone home of Jamie Calvert, a typical old dalesman, a jovial bluff broad-



Moor-Close Jamie.

[Ernest Forbes

shouldered, weather-beaten 'Swardalite.' According dale ways he is known best by the cognomen of 'Moor-Close Jamie'—his father was 'Moor-Close Geordie.' Here in this set-apart tenement, son has succeeded father for at least a dozen generations, over 300 years! Jamie is very apt with his tongue, curt humorous tags of speech such as "Well knawn? Well, ah'm varry weel kennt i' Swardal." A tourist once enquired of him the depth of the 'Buttertubs,' "Wha, noo," replied Jamie, "ah knaw theer's yan (one) wi'out any bottom, and theer's another yan deeper still."

Jamie says that when he was a lad folks were only half-civilized—"Wha noo, ah remember theer was yan Jack Mecca, he used allus to forget Sunday. He wor yance leading peat i' Cotterdal, an' he nivver knew at it wor't Sunday 'til he threw't hoss and cart ovver twice!"

He could tell his tale of awful storms, when the moors lay covered to the height of the field wall tops for ten weeks; and of one Henry Wastell who was lost in a storm of snow, and was only found three weeks later—dead, of course—at Tailbrigg, standing bolt upright in the peat hagg! He also related the fate of Edward Cleasby, of Muker, who was beguiled or bewitched by some "water kelpie," and never more heard of! Jamie fancies that "theer's a muckle of brass hid up at t' top a Swardal. When ah wer a lad, foaks didn't put ther brass (money) i't banks! Noo, theer wer aude Jock Duke—he hed lots o' brass, an' when he deed, suddent, theer wor nivver ony clue to what becam on it." From this, and other inferences sprung from his own knowledge, Jamie is sure there is "a vast o' wealth hidden somewheer i' Sleddale or Nine Standard Rigg." We were also told how his grandfather remembered seeing deer feeding on Shunnor and Stags Fell, although as to this latter place-name in Wensleydale a 'stag' is a young male horse, or even a cockerel. He himself recalls paying eight shillings over and above his rent—a provision against "staggs" or any

stock straying out of their rightful bounds and on to Moor-close side, a custom of very ancient date. Among his other heirlooms is an old cabinet, dated 1679, which has been in the family since that date at least.

Another droll and typical Swardaler is Richard Alderson Scott, of Park House. Instead of going the direct path to Thwaite we cross the moor to Keld, and thence follow the beautifully winding road with the great mount of Kisdon on our left (east) the whole way. The only inn in upper Swaledale above Muker and Thwaite is the "Cat-hole," by the wayside near Keld, but in a more prominent position than the village. Its name, whether originally 'Hole' or 'Hold' is curious, and is not unlikely to have originated from the spot having been the lair or lurking place of the now nearly extinct wild (yellowish) cat. The north end of Kisdon (a limestone hill with many cavelets and fissures in the basement rock), and its forest crags were formerly a resort of many of the smaller wild animals of North Britain, bones of fox, lynx, hyæna, and even bear having been found in many parts of North and West Yorkshire. The inn house is only small, and not well adapted for "accommodation for man and beast."

Here, by the "Cat hole," we met Thomas Metcalfe, whose alias was "Dicky Tommy," who declared to us he was bred and born at Keld. Pointing his hand to where the mist hung over the hollow where lies the hamlet, said he, "Ah've lived awl ma life doon amang yon mist!" Dicky Tommy it was who told us of Cherry Kearton, the gamekeeper, who acted also as a local preacher, and had "ta'en it awl up, awl in his oan head, for eh cuddn't read a letter in a beake (book) te saave his oan loife." Kearton invariably took for his text the passage about Zaccheus in the Sycamore Tree, and his opening words were always "Come doon, Zacchy." By way of a change he sometimes preached about the Shipwreck of Saint Paul. "Cherry," said Metcalfe, "didn't



reckon to be a gert praicher, but he was a man of gert faith, an' he could allus keep't foaks wakken."

Between the "Cat-hole" and Greeness the old pack-horse track, or "Corpse-way," from Keld and Upper Swaledale passed over the summit of Mount Kisdon, and dropped down its eastern slope and crossed the Swale water half a mile or so north of Muker, kept along the moorland terrace high above the river and to north of it, and so on by Gunnerside to Barf-end, Low Row, Reeth, to its goal at Grinton. By those who know the district this ancient *via mortu*, the green way of the Dead, can still be followed. Imagination pictures the many sad processions in "thunder, lightening, snow, and in rain," this ancient way has seen—the difficulties to be overcome, the weary pace in the short days of snow, a very nightmare of the Last Rites, to decently put away their beloved dead at the bidding of Faith! But, properly to understand the old route, the reader will have to forget the present good road to Richmond, which runs mostly along the south bank of the Swale. In the old days, before Macadam, there was no such road, so the old path and only one kept to the edge of the moor, along the limestone terrace as already indicated. The ancient trackway has been the witness of scenes both of joy and sorrow and hope—it was the wedding-party route, the christening route and the funeral route for all places west of Kisdon, a distance from Grinton's Mother Church of between twelve and sixteen miles. Sometimes as many as ten or a dozen couples on horseback, others afoot on "shanks' galloway" would follow the cavalcade to Grinton—how different a scene to that when in after years, silently instead of with laughter and gay speech, the same bodies, their life's labour over, were carried down for the last time to Grinton by their kith and kin. The corpse was borne on men's shoulders along this highway of the dead all the way to Grinton previous to interments being made possible at Muker, not in a

wooden coffin but swathed in linen winding sheets, and enclosed in long wicker baskets laid upon a bier or carrier. It needs no violent stretch of fancy to look back through the years and years that have altered the manners and customs of the dale so much in some respects, and see the Funeral procession—a thin black line against the white carpeted ground, winding its way, sinuous-like, creeping with many a pause and twist up the slope and over the lonely Pisgah tableland of Mount Kisdon, and then down to the Swale and once more the upward toil to gain the terrace of Ivelet-side, and on over lonesome stony forest or heath land! A relay of bearers was absolutely necessary; at intervals there were stone seats or resting places along the route to place the trestle or carrier upon. A halt was invariably made opposite the “Punch Bowl” at Feetham, where spiced hot ale and cakes and biscuits were served out to the bearers. From Feetham, refreshed in body if not in heart, the cortege toiled on with the body up Peat Gate and through Kearton, past Park Hall and John o’ Gaunts to Reeth. Here, if not perhaps before, many of the villagers and the “unbidden” would join the double file of mourners, and “with sad steps and slow” to the chanting of a dirge, forward to the church, the “Mother Church” to which all her children come back soon or late, and from the tower of which

“The bell of death beat slow—

It paused now, and now with rising knell

Flung to the hollow gale its sullen sound.”

Here the Swales, the Peacocks, the Aldersons, Metcalfes, Calverts, Keartons, and many another old dale family are laid at rest, hard by the river-way of their homeland; and over their graves, when stress of weather brings the moorbirds down from the heaths and fells, grousecock will ‘beck’ and curlew wail an accompaniment to the dirge of the Swale. But enough of sorrow—there are brighter scenes; it is not always winter and death. Every rood of the way from Keld to Thwaite the tortuous road runs up and

down by the tiny hamlets of Thorns, Aigill, and Angram, farm nests one might call them, along the western brow above the beck, and a series of vignettes of natural scenes give charm to each new turn. Rustic cots have antique porches, and both thorn and rowan trees overhang the bank here, or a grey green chequered mossy wall there, each feature full of unexpected colour and lines of beauty. Let us attempt (it may be futilely) a scene viewed at nightfall on this very road.



Lane Scene, near Keld.

[Owen Bowen]

## A SWALE HEAD VIGNETTE.

A moor-man passes us, habilimented in the primitive rusticity of the higher dale, plain rough-leggined garb. His face is seamed, stained and toil-worn through the buffeting of many a pitiless blast of winter. The frost of garnered years tells that he has over-run the three score and ten of the

psalmist. He leads a white fell galloway by the halter, and across its back are balanced two great trusses of hay.

In the background, looming shadowily, is a low cosily-nooked 'gaard,' from a window of which a faint gleam of mellow light spreads and makes, with indescribable witchery of Rembrandtish colour over man and beast. Behind and beyond, on the fell side, a shadowy tree raises its skeleton arms, bleached and spectre-like, a nature-made gibbet against the leaden sky space of cloud. Over the crest of a further-away hill, faintly penetrating the cloud-mist of evening is visible the last glimpse of the fading opalescent light of the now set Orb. Such a picture is too delicate to be painted or described as the writer saw it, but it can be felt. The solemnity and the impression it made holds sway for long in one's memory.

Such is one of many scenes that possess us as we saunter on through grey old Angram. Striding its hill buttress we soon come in sight of Thwaite, and from the brow of the last hill we can hear distinctly the ring-ring, clang, ring! of the blacksmith's hammer at the smithy by the brig and inn (which he keeps), but there is no "spreading chestnut tree" shading his "smiddy" here. In other respects David Calvert is a wholesome example of the village Smith—long may their race last! A broad chested, strong and clear-eyed man is he, with large and powerful arms, blacksmith and publican to boot, being also the landlord of the "Joiners' Arms." Here both beast and man can be fed and the horse shod after a trying or prolonged tramp over the hills from Hawes or Kirkby Stephen. This inn will be found "a home from home" truly, a place to leave with regret, and come again to, with expectations that will not be disappointed, after many days, so long as the present home-rule prevails there at the motherly hands of Mrs. Calvert and her daughter.

Thwaite, grey and sombre, with the beauty of age and decay over it, rugged but a little ruined, as some old dame's face grows, rests snugly in the lap of the surrounding 'eternal hills,' was named by the Northmen settling here a thousand years back, when they cleared the place of its wood and made it one of their settlements. Century

after century, even to this day, their descendents have found their living here, reared families as doughty as themselves, housed and fed their cattle and braved the inclemencies of this wild uplandish place. At times the raging elements have nearly succeeded in ravaging and razing Thwaite to the ground, carrying much bodily away. This was the case half a dozen years ago, when a terrific thunderstorm and cloud-burst swept down from Shunnor, and every evil spirit of earth and sky seemed to have been let loose: as one dalesman put it, "It cam i' twa gert pushes." One, Broderick of Hawes, with a keen eye for natural phenomena, observed on the morning of this great flood, which nearly destroyed Hardraw and Thwaite, what possibly gives the clue to the cause of this dreadful tempest. There was an ominous silence before the furies of the air were let loose, and then the triple storm began. There were *three tiers* of discharging thunder-clouds, one above the other, moving slowly northwards over the heights between Simonstone and Thwaite; had the awful bombardment of the land *lasted five minutes* longer both places would have been doomed—wiped off the map! As it was, great numbers of cattle and sheep were lost, houses, laithes, walls innumerable were thrown down, and a vast amount of property swept away. David Calvert lost nearly all his stock of carts and implements, and only escaped drowning by what seemed a miracle. The dwellings of Thwaite were flooded several feet, and the little sheltered vegetable and flower gardens of the place were wrecked, despoiled of all they held, roots and seed being carried away from the plots here to beautify nooks and corners next year at lower levels!

The interior of the "Joiners' Arms" is very clean and inviting, with its large warmth-dealing fireplace, its long-settle back to the door, its grandfather's clock, delf-rack, dresser, and other house furnishings of olden time. Everything here gives an air of comfort and welcome to the place. But the brightest adornment in



this household is the willing, kindly mannered domesticated maiden—Swardal's "Mary the Maid of the Inn"—who, with an inbred natural courtesy, seconds her mother's efforts to make visitors feel as if they were indeed expected and welcome guests.

Stone axes and flint implements of warfare have been discovered at Thwaite, and resting on the garden wall of the inn is an ancient stone quern, or early British hand-mill for grinding grain; this goes with other finds far to prove the antiquity of the place.



Interior of the Clogger's Dwelling.

[*Ernest Forbes*

One house in this place—or, shall we say shed?—has a sort of loft or linhey about six feet square for its bedchamber, and the lower apartment is only about eight feet by six. This was tenanted for many years by a man and his wife. He was by trade a clogger; and his must have been the smallest ‘house and shop’ in existence. We give a sketch of the place.

At Thwaite live several fine stalwart dalesmen. For example, here, round the corner buffeted by the wind which never blows half heartedly here, comes George Kearton, better known as “Cher Dode.” He stands over six feet, and is a fine specimen of the dale’s product in bone, brawn and big heart. Viewed with his rough blanket worn shawl-wise round his shoulders, floating like a streamer out behind, as he passes us with heavy swinging stride, we think what a grand figure! Surely this dale eclipses all others of York in upkeeping the standard of the race.

It was here, too, at Thwaite we first met “Moor-Close Jamie”; and the man who wed his ‘dowter,’ “Jack o’t Hill-Top.” But really we must say Adieu—not, we trust, a farewell for ever but a good-by for the time—to Thwaite and Swaledale, tackling, with more than one backward look, the sinuous stony hill road running between Great Shunner on the west and Lovely Seat on the east, best known over all this part of Richmondshire as the Buttertubs Pass. To this road with its natural curiosities our next chapter must be devoted.

## CHAPTER VII.

## UPPER WENSLEYDALE.

BUTTERTUBS PASS is the westernmost way of communication for hoofed traffic between Swaledale and Wensleydale. The stony unfenced road runs in a rough crescent between the brow above Thwaite where a gate across the road gives access to the open moorland Swales, and we only meet with another gate when dipping down to Simonstone; its general direction is south between Lovely Seat with its Wensleydale scarp of Stags Fell (2,213 feet) and Great Shunnor Fell (2,346 feet) on the western side, but separated from the road by a deep bare gill, the upper end of which ends in a cul-de-sac of Serces.

Between Thwaite and Simonstone Cottages above Hardraw, there is not a single human habitation. The first two miles out of Thwaite is tiresome uphill work, but the growing magnificence of the scenery on looking back more than compensates for the toil, and can scarcely be rivalled in England. But woe to those who are caught in a storm crossing the pass, since there is not the slightest fend against the fury of the gale, or stinging arrows of relentless sleet or rain. Not even a shed to shelter in or bush to break the fury of the discharge. The writer has crossed under varying atmospheric conditions at all seasons; once with a companion during a raging snowstorm neither are likely to forget. The road hollows were filled two to three feet deep in shrouds of white, and all around a wild white wilderness of hills hardly distinguishable from the sky, full of blinding particles of ice-shot



The Buttertubs Pass.

[Owen Bowen]

snow charging like millions of needles as it were into our faces, making our devious progress over the arctic waste alarmingly slow. Nevertheless, we were recompensed for the bitter experience of this journey, but of this later. After crossing the bridge at Thwaite we soon bend to the right and follow the track here as yet stonewalled to left and right, leading through the passway of the hills at its lowest point (some 1,600 feet) between the peaking masses on either hand. After the fences are left the road rises and falls, curves to one side or another through the pass, along a sort of irregular terrace without any protection.

On either hand the huge hill masses, from their bulk alone, are silently impressive, their grandeur as they lie couchant as it were some huge animals turned to stone, or some vast mounds covering such, is beyond depiction in words. Looking back, we see the grand stone tomb of Kisdon, impassively dividing Swaledale head into two parts; whilst down below a beck can be heard plunging with an angry swish down the ravine or canyon of Cliff Gill to join the Swale. Above, on the east, is the pyramidal heights of Lovely Seat, better known on its south facing and precipitous slope as Stag's Fell. A sentinel of Nature, it stands guarding the way we are passing on, and pack-clouds drifting or skimming billow-like over these heights or headlands of earth giving space and bulk to the scene, dissipating or parting to gather again as some obstruction is passed. Far, far away, down the Swale valley—a skiff-like channel, long and narrow—lies a diffused canopy of sunshot mist, with detaching wisplike portions conveying to the eye the effect of smoke flooding and trailing along the green-purple stripe of the dale!

Before attaining the summit of the pass we reach the 'Butter-tubs' themselves—situate in surroundings that are as weird and fantastic as a landscape of Gustave Dorè's—this cliff in silhouette looking like a distorted un-human face.



The "tubs" themselves are fractured more or less circular chasms in the limestone, and give the pass its name as well as intimate its chief peril to those who ride, drive or walk its tortuous way in the dark; cool and cavernous, twilit at mid-day are these deep pits or "pots," appearing to be gouged out of the rock by some gigantic elemental force: a giant's work in old days the fanciful would have said, though we know it to have been *water*



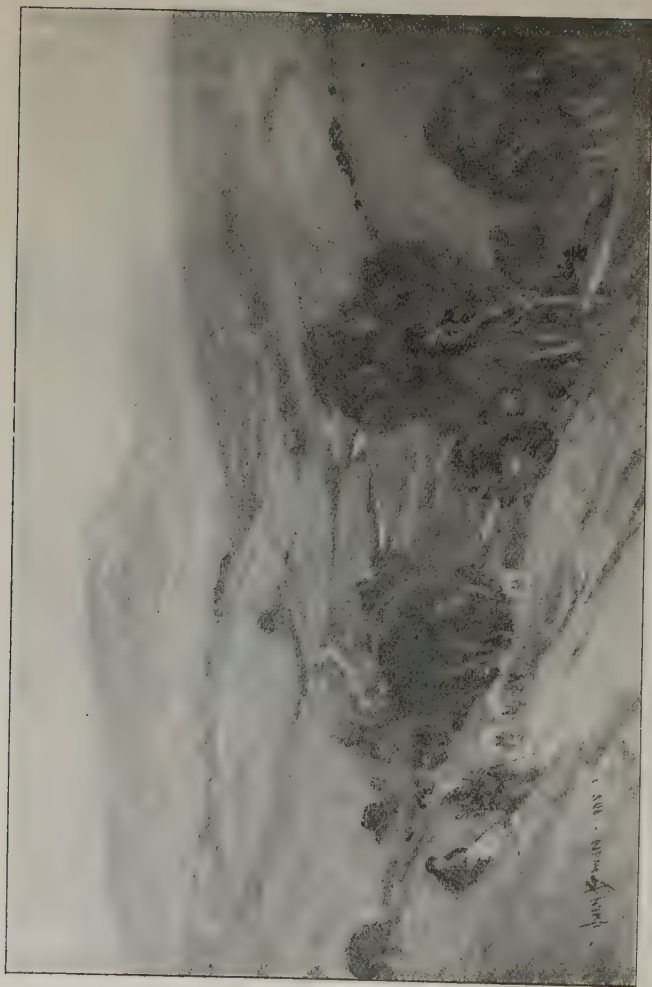
The Buttertubs.

[R. Rodwell.

merely! Still, water solving and transferring is the greatest and commonest Force Nature knows (except the force of heat and cold, which raised the mountains); and water has worn through uncountable centuries these pits until their sides resemble clusters of shafts and capitals of columns of white sparry stone, not unlike the pillars of a Gothic Cathedral. The hoar channelled flutings of these pit-shafts are moist with retentive moss, and give a root-hold for a great variety of vegetation, from the ginny scented juniper bush to the wild raspberry cane, the golden-rod with its

molten crown of flower, and the peculiar *butterwort*, a herb with a tuft of sickle-curved light green greasy leaves, out of which, on a stalk of two or three inches, springs a violet purple-spurred flower, not unlike a small snapdragon or an orchis. Bird-cherry 'trees'—mere bushes here—festoon the sides of the 'tubs,' with rowans, goat saughs, and plants of the wild rose. At the bottom of the largest shaft is a cool bed of ferny green—a couch fit for an Undine or water-fairy, aye, and a fairy's boudoir also. A shining 'liverwort' spreads its grey sheet over the rock face and other plants which only a botanist can name, decorate the grooved and ledged walls of these tubs. A rill of water trickles and plashes fairy-fountain like into one 'pot' and passes out of sight into the bowels of the earth—to explore recesses and hidden chambers—who knows? man's eyes have never seen! According to the 'lie' of the limestone strata, the water from these pits may communicate with vast untrodden chambers away beneath Stag's Fell. Sheep occasionally slip and fall into these "pots," but there is no record of that having been the fate of a human being, although the pass-road runs a course between the five tubs, two on the east cliff gill side, and the three on the north-west. Christopher Metcalf, alias "Gurt Kit," when a boy was often let down to get out the fallen sheep, but he would allow none but his father to handle the rope. But of accidents, there are none to tell. Many a dalesman, "a wee bit drunkit," has driven or ridden his horse recklessly through the pass—the latter, let us suppose—possessed some "sight o' sense" which was for the time denied to his master.

But we must proceed. Another mile's climb, the solemn whistle of the whaup in our ears ever, brings us to the summit of this Pass, and instantly the five finger-forked head of Wensleydale comes into view. It was on our emergence from this gate of the pass, in the teeth of the deaving snowstorm mentioned a page or two back, that a Vision opened out the like of which our eyes may



Peep into Wensleydate, from Simonstone Moor.

[Owen Bowen.]

never be favoured with again—a peep into the plains of Eden from the lovely hills of an arctic land! Behind us, about us, an Iceland clad in snow; to the south, looking down on Hawes, the contrast magically startling—the Yore and its banking lands, and the far-off roofs of Hawes glistening with an iridescence as of silver and copper ores under the magical rays of the sun, which appeared as though these were concentrated on the distant dale only. Surely that was not Wensleydale—Hawes town—we saw! Rather a dream-town on an enchanted shore, a glittering thing of fancy, not of fact! an imaginary mirage, not a scene from real life!

But the view ended not here—there was the frame of the picture: away to the west it was impossible to descry where snow-capped summits stopped—where cloud or sky began—the two were blended into one harmonious whole, a thing quite indescribably marvellous!

#### A SUMMER SCENE.

YONDER, below the undefined horizon line is the oblique narrow cleft of main Yoredale; beyond the forking-off of Widdale flanked by Ten End Fell, which is abrupt and looks as if some glacier or giant force had cut it off short, with the distant ridge rise of Dodd Fell lying back over against Cam, where the Ribble rises. This depression which followed leads by Birk Rigg to Lunds, backed in the far west by Wild Boar Fell, is visible to our eyes from up here; with a glimpse of the hump of Penyghent, and on a clear day the water of Morecambe Bay through a gap in the skyline ridges over Mossdale. Dod Fell looks like the back of a 'leviathan.' Whernside shows out too as a long grey purple line, higher than Ingleborough, although not seeming so because further away.

But we have not exhausted the radiant and radiating points of the prospect as seen from the apex point of the Buttertubs pass. Due west, to our right, the lean down-bearing thigh and calf of Erne shews us there is another dale (Cotter beyond), and beyond that the higher buttressed bulk of High Seat. But Inglebro', as its name shews forth—the brow whereon in the red days of warfare, men kept watch by lighted fires—is the most striking because most definitely isolated mountain bulk of all: the rock citadel of Nature, as it were, dominating the whole of this highland of Richmondshire. Over Hawes is the couchant lion-like bulk of Weather Fell, the lion's head to the west, and its tail the Knot of Buttersett. Hawes town sits on its own natural 'haugh,' a strip of homesteads straggling along a raised terrace, in its turn dominated again at its eastern end by the unusual square grey battlemented church tower with a single finial at one corner.

Such is the view which this high water-shed line has to show and suggest to us: a wildly grand scene whether the wind shivers along the bents of the moorland pass—and through us—and huge masses of cumulus cloud, like floating islands of ghostly consistency and shape. But they turn our attention from the underfoot road, which grows steeper suddenly and zig-zags down by the stony spoil heaps of worked-out flag quarries to Simonstone, well set on its wooded terrace or stair landing a couple of hundred feet above the level of Hardraw—a low-lying place just where the Fossdale beck after its flying leap over the Force Scar joins Yore, and so is doubly liable to flood when the waters are at all "out." The Simonstone quarries, of a splittable slate flagstone, are rich in the fossil remains of a peculiar form of sea worm—the *Serpula* of the ancient days when the rock was deposited as mud at the bottom of a shallow sea. These casts or impressions in the plates of flag are various in appearance; some are snakily curled up, others have a trident or fish-hook like figure, and are locally called "Devil's



bolts" or supposed to denote the impact of His Satanic Majesty's tail! These creatures were in their day as harmless as the earthworms of to-day, and as beneficial; but one can well understand how wild fancies have been built up in local minds from their superficial resemblances.



Hardraw Force.

Edmund Bogg

Now we have reached the wood above Hardraw, a planted tree gill that a former Earl of Wharnccliffe afforested with a many choice cone-bearing trees. A beck, the Foss, races and chatters merrily and unthinkingly as a child scampers into danger, down, down, in the inviting shade of overarching boscage, in a narrowing limestone channel until, without warning even to those who walk with it downwards until within a few yards of its cataclysm, it takes one bound, a flying leap, ninety-nine feet (once less, but the rim or lip of the fall was artificially cemented, about what time the Hardraw demesne was 'improved' by tree planting) into the horse-shoe shaped amphitheatre or abyss that, viewed from below, is known as Hardraw Force Gill. As to the fall itself, the limestone wall-like scar at its summit is composed of horizontal beds of rock harder than the other darker layers below, these wearing least project so that the water curves like water from a pump's spout and strikes ground several feet out from the hollowed wall of rock. It is thus possible, nay easy when the stream is not in spate, to walk behind the fall on the dark slippery shale ever wearing away more and more (a foot a year it has been said) without being more than "leaked"—to use a local term—by the spray. Wordsworth who visited Hardraw mentions this fact without scientifically explaining it, and also refers to "the huge rock and the bank winding round with its living foliage on the left." He also tells of "the soothing murmur" of the ever falling water amid the quiet seclusion of the long summer days which one could spend here, and of "the enchanting effect produced by the Arabian scene of colour as the wind blew the great waterfall." We have not been in Arabia—Araby the blest—and the spot is nothing like so quiet and unfrequented in summer now as it was in the poet's lifetime. Band and open-air choral contests have many times taken place here, in the amphitheatre of level ground just below the fall, since 1884 at least, Lord Wharnccliffe lending

the ground for the day (generally late in June), and some famous bands and glee choirs have competed, the affair being organised by the leading musical spirits of Hawes and the neighbourhood. It has seemed to some—one, at least—almost sacrilege to permit such an intrusion of “trained bands” with Nature’s music so ever audible! What would the Dipper—an aquatic thrush and water-loving bird that rears its young in mossy oak-leaf lined nests along all these Wensleydale streams—or the Curlew think of such an invasion? The little white breast would flutter to a hiding place in wondering fear, and the grave piccolo note of the whaup would be relegated to the solitary recesses of Shunner! Is this true or false sentiment? Need the notes of a human voice uplifted in song make a discord or seem out of place in the presence of the organ-like bourdon note or the drowsing splash of falling water. We leave the question unsettled for others to answer. As for the fall itself, Dr. Whitaker says that in 1739-40, the cascade was a mass of ice, through a central tube in which the water fell. The same phenomenon occurred 140 years later in 1880-81, when it was photographed in that condition, a great cone of ice rising from the dub into which the spout ordinarily drops to half way up the cliff. There is certainly much that is magnificently impressive in the view of this circling beetling height of cliff with the down-stream of crystal scintillant white cutting the picture in half. A sheer or hollowed-out precipice, in shape like the Moorish head of an Alhambra archway, and one hundred feet in height, more on each flank, and from the keystone centre a stream (small or big according to the rainfall at the time) shooting forward in mid-air and broken at the edges into a filigree or lace-work design of silvery lines quivering with light; and instinct, as if alive, with colour! Showers of filmiest spray float away down the rock-strewn ravine. The best time to view Hardraw is after a two or three days’ rain between late May and early October.

Then the sound of the waters is no longer a drowsing splash but an angry overpowering roar, and the dub below is a boiling cauldron, aweing and tremendous ! At other times, the sun shining in early afternoon from over Wether Fell, a double rainbow hangs its prismatic curtains of Iris across the rocky arc and gives it additional splendour and that Arabesque of vivid colour which Wordsworth made note of. Then indeed one is loth to leave Hardraw.

At the foot of the gill stretches the small strip village of Hardraw, and a flagged path across the pastures from Simonstone to Hawes, with wooden seats for weary sightseers at intervals, put up in 1886.

Hardraw village itself contains little of commanding interest to-day : church and parsonage are comparatively modern, and the most exacting and at times adventurous part of the vicar's duty consists in journeying up-dale to grey lonely Lunds Chapel-of-Ease, no light task in days of stress and storm. Hardraw Old Hall is a very ancient building, now to some extent modernised in appearance, and had formerly a high steeply pitched roof of oak. Fifty years ago most of the houses here were thatched with ling and rushes, the latter growing in the pastures by the river ; the chief occupation of the inhabitants at that period was that of knitting. The village suffered considerable damage during the great storm that broke over Shunner a few years back, the old inn—modernised without benefit of late years—being inundated to a depth of six feet. Richard Braithwait ("Drunken Barnaby") in his rhyming "Journey," writes very scurrilously of this village, the chief attraction of which is, to-day, that *only* through the inn's premises, where the key is kept, can strangers get access to the purlieus of the "great water spout," as the force has been disparagingly called. "Drunken Barnaby" said--

“Thence to Hardraw wher’s hard hunger,  
 Barren cliffs and clints of wonder;  
 Never here Adonis lived,  
 Unless in Cole’s his parlour tried.  
 Inn is nastie, dusty, fustie  
 Both with smoke and rubbish mastie.”

So a “chiel amang them takkin notes,” a critical eye wrote 250 years ago; we take it that the above comment is inapplicable to-day. The inn has been re-roofed and undergone other structural alterations, yet it is of very great age. The church is dedicated to St. Mary and St. John, and was built in 1880 by the Earl of Wharncliffe. Apart from the Force and Cove Scar, we note two things—the flagged footways through the fields, and the steep and stony zig-zagging highroad ending at the New Bridge over the Yore in the water meadows of the flat below the haugh on which Hawes townlet rests, the broad pebbled reaches of the shoaled river here tipped as we look with mellow radiance by the westering evening sun.

A mile or so east of Hardraw, at a higher level on the north slope of the dale, is Sedbusk. Near this hamlet of farms are the underground chambers and passages known as the Maze holes, access to which from a rough pasture is marked by a thorn-bush by a vertical pit or pot, not unlike one of the Buttertubs but much smaller. Here local fancy has it that the fairies were wont to meet annually for a revel. A variation of the tale is that the water kelpie who haunts the district betwixt Yore and High Abbotside slope, neighs and snorts by the footway leading to Sedbusk.

For the present leaving Hawes and the dale proper, we follow a cart-track, wood bordered, west from the Simonstone buildings. It is the ‘short cut’ to Erne (hill), and the lone and remote hamlet of Cotter. The way dips and then crosses the Fossdale (Hardraw) beck by a single low arched moss-grown bridge, whence it turns



now this way now that by a cottage or laithe or two into Fossdale—a sheltered basin of rich tolerably level thorn dotted meadow land. At the upper end of this green bay the gorge of Fossdale draws in, and there is a thick dank and darksome wood. Here there is (or was) a heronry—a pair or two of that grey ghostly long-legged fishing-bird breeding in some deserted corbie's or sparrow-



A Distant Peep of Hawes from the River.

[Owen Bowen.

hawk's nests high up in the tall trees shafting upwards towards the light above a swamp. As Dr. Lees informs me, "In this gorgeful of mossed and decaying fallen timber, there grows the lilac-purple flowered form of the true Shamrock (*Oxalis*) or Wood Sorrel, with the modest white flowered Frog-Orchis (*Habenaria albida*) and the Columbine nearer the Fossdale farm, and in the hay-grass

fields a plenty of the sweet clove-scented *Gymnadenia* Orchis with clouts of the yellow and amber Birdsfoot *Lotus* as well."

Keeping to the Cotterdale road, now an unfenced 'green way,' as it trends up the easy ascent of the buttress of Shunner which is called Erne, we soon have another diversified prospect—we can see right down into the green pasture trough of crag-scarred Cotterdale: it looks in the clear atmosphere only a stones-throw off, but it would be a good rifle that could project a bullet into the cluster of buildings that is the hamlet. Quite another weary mile, up—up, to the right (north) are the pits of Cotterhead, where the 'crow coal,' a burnable shale of inferior 'slack' quality is got—or was got—by a horizontal heading into the hillside, as is the case also on the south face of Stag's Fell under the low crag of the "Under-sett" limestone. But we follow a down bearing track now, presently arriving at the bed of the dale before us where cluster by the stream the dozen or so dwellings which compose Cotter village. A road continuing its windings along the fell side connects with the main road of the dale here above Birk Rigg. A little higher up above Cotter-ham are some caverns in the limestone (here in the bed of the stream) which go by the title of Cotterham-House hole. The two streams which form the beck Cotter have their fountain-heads right up in the ravine cloven breast of Great Shunner (2,346 feet). It is an 'outlandish' district, and many are the stories told of moving escapes from flood and storm, and of late years more than one person has lost his life in Cotter in snow.

For some weeks after the great storm of 1895 the roads between Swale and Yoredale were impassable to wheeled vehicles, and for several weeks no market could be held at Hawes, few or nobody to attend with stock to sell! Walls of snow from twelve to sixteen feet in height barred the way over Buttertubs pass; and as in the previous long frost and great snowfall of 1885-6, after the roads were 'opened,' that is dug out, great iceberg-like or hewn marble blocks of frozen snow rested at intervals along the highways either side the road.

As shewing the general and expected inclemency of the weather in the north-west dales, an announcement in the *Advertiser* for November, 1846, informs the public that "the Mail Coach, Hawes and Kendal"—which had to cross the summit and descend Garsdale, quite as bad a high road then as now—"had ceased to run during the present winter season"; and postal communication to the west of Hawes had to go round by Bedale and York and Manchester. A letter for Dent (ten miles) took *three days* before reaching its destination.

The vicar of Hardraw has had remarkable experiences during his long ministry in his journeys some six miles or so up to Lunds Church: long detours had to be made, or else balancing walks—acrobatic progressions rather—*along the tops of the walls* for considerable distances! It sounds a 'traveller's tale' of romance to hear accounts of night journeys to outlandish districts by 'parson'



Cotterdale.

[Edmund Bogg.]

or the now venerable medical practitioner of Hawes, who was for years, he and his gig and man Ned, at every ones beck and call. During winters' frosts he discarded wheels and sledged over the wall tops across the hard frozen wind-banked snow! Probably his intimate year's long acquaintance with the circuit of his practice was in a measure due to his instinct for Sport with gun or, best of all 'rod,' which took him into every nook and corner of the upper Dale. One can see (in fancy) the farmer's wife or buxom wench stirring the fire and turning up the lamp's wick as the doctor's sled or gig wheels are heard, or the watchful collie's bay or yap gives notice of his approach quicker than human hearing. Cotterdale is bare of wood until a mile below the hamlet the stream finds the first of a series of transverse limestone steps or scars to leap across or burst through in spouting blowing rapids. Here, as if to frame and curtain the "Forces," of which there are three, the ground is picturesquely besprent: boscage of (wych), elm, oaks, ashes, rowans, sloe trees and hazel bushes in glorious profusion and luxuriance, all lichened over—sign of pure air and constant humidity—with many rare and handsome damask and tapestry-like plaques and fringes. In no spot of Yorkshire do these bark growths decorate the arms of the trees more abundantly—a woodland bower harmonising in every tint and line. Cotterdale lower is a botanists' and artists' Paradise, whilst the beck sides are bordered as with gold from a remarkable profusion of auranian Hawkweeds, which continues down below Birk Rigg nearly to Appersett.

From Cotterdale we keep on the high ridge to north of the Yore and present high road, within the bounds of the 'forest' of Lunds—this path or track being of high antiquity. Lund is a Scandinavian word meaning a wood, and in the far-off days of the invading Northmen this bare stony treeless district was a great

forest—perhaps never of great trees but a hagg or thicket of sloe thorn, birk, rowan, oak and ash. Therein grim visaged Vikings from beyond the North Sea found wild animals in sufficient numbers for their needs. Evidences of this pre-existence of wood have been unearthed in digging peat from the turferies on the moor plateaus, in the shape of ‘black’ oaken boles and wild hagg-cherry. The place is doubtless a Danish settlement, for there is a



The First Bridge—Lunds Fell. [Edmund Bogg.

Lund in Scania. The church is a primitive barn-like building, and on our first visit some fourteen years ago, was in sad disrepair, but it has now been renovated. Barker, author of the “Three Days in Wensleydale,” relates that he once attended service in this chapel in winter, when the seats and floor were covered with snow



to a depth of two or three inches. One story has it that for many years the church was minus a door, so, to prevent cattle finding shelter within the sanctuary, a big thorn bush was thrust securely into the doorway, and the unwritten law of the church-going dalesman was, "T'last oot puts t'bush it hole." To this lonesome wind and rain-swept God's acre, the dead were borne over the high moor from Cotterdale for burial. The old track which crosses high Abbotside and thence down to Lunds Church is still known as the 'corpse road.' Here, too, sleeps that original character, an itinerant pedlar of small wares for women-folk, whose far and wide soubriquet was "Thread Jack." A parson's farewell address to his congregation on leaving this church was, "You do not love



Lunds Church.

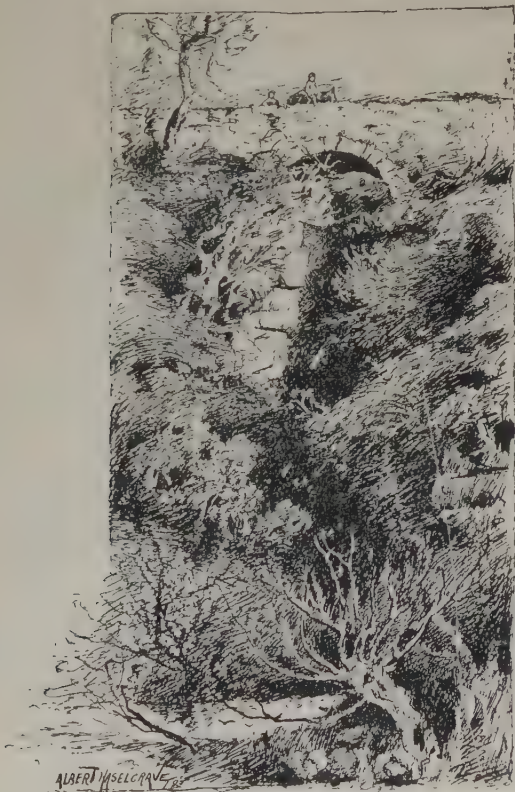
[F. Dean.]

one another, and God does not love you: for in all these three or four years I have ministered here, there has not been a marriage or a death."

Passing north-west along the brow of Lunds Fell, we attain the old pack-horse road which keeps to the right and above the present turnpike. It trends to Hell Gill bridge—a dry velvety turfed 'green way' rising and falling but keeping its direction north, on the natural terrace level which, as at Leyburn Shawl, Ivelet, and many another slope of these hills, marks the top of a mural cliff or scarp of Yoredale limestone, unlike where the shales are which crumble to [a slope and not a natural causeway.

Hell Gill is a long chasm or crevasse in the limestone rock—a rift, bearing north-east to south-west, some eight or ten feet wide and in some places fifty feet in depth, down through which natural canyon in miniature flows and babbles the infant river Eden. The name sounds a misnomer here, if we might judge from the peat browned unruly torrent that lashes through the tortuous gorge in times of storm; it is less obstreperous on fine summer days; but after its trial it emerges purified (as it were) of sin and discontent for, bending north unconfined, at its own sweet will, it flows tranquilly through that beautiful golden vale bearing its name—the Vale of Eden. Hell Gill is "the Stygian rivulet—the horrid drear wilderness" of Camden. Leland says, "There is a bek cawled Hell Gille because it runneth in such a deadly place." It is indeed a wild solitary land and seems to have impressed these ancient topographers greatly. Hell Gill bridge connects the counties of York and Westmoreland. It was here, story says, that Turpin, on the back of "Black Bess," escaped from his pursuers by *leaping over* the chasm from the west countree side into Yorkshire, where the warrant did not 'run.' This structure likewise bears the name of 'Devil's Bridge': under it are to be seen the remains

of the piers of an earlier crossway, which tradition alleges to have been the work of His Sable Majesty.



The Devils Eridge.

Let us follow this wide green way a mile or so into Westmoreland. By this route have passed Celt, Roman, Saxon and Northmen down to the last century. It was doubtless the way Mary Queen of Scots was brought into Wensleydale, and it needs no great imagination to see the cavalcade, caparisoned and apparelled

in richly cut but sombre hued garments, taking its sober and dignified way along to Bolton. This way too was inlet and outlet for the wild foraging Scots raiders, and the peacefuller drover's way in later days. It was the way that the great Lady Anne Clifford paced along from Appleby with her long trail of baggage-bearing steeds in her train. And now the fall of land allows us to see a long stretch of the Eden Land. Below us is the village of Outhgill and the ancient kirk of Mallerstang, repaired and beautified by Lady Clifford when it had long lain in ruinous condition. Yonder too are the indeterminate ruins of Pendragon Castle, which is supposed to have been erected by the British King Uther Pendragon. And here tradition reports he was besieged, but the enemy failing to capture the fortress, resorted to guile; they poisoned the well of the castle, of which King Uther and his soldiers drank, and drinking, died. Beyond is the pile of Lammerside Castle and Wharton Hall, and further the roofs of Kirkby Stephen. But we must turn back and take our way into Wensleydale again. Wild Boar Fell, a majestic precipitous frowning ridge towers on our right as we go past Shaw Paddock—once an inn—and take stock of the more than pleasing defile in which we are. Hill ridges limit the view on every side. To our left is Lunds Fell, not so lofty or darkly frowning as the Wild Boar's, but interesting because on its summit moss rises *the* river of Wensleydale variously spelt and spoken of by writer or native as the Yore, Yure, Ure, Eure, Jore and Jure, Jor and Yer: all of them variations of the "broad-acred" County of York itself. The Aryan root means water, just as the Cymric *Dur* means water. So there can be no mistake about it, this is the waterland of York.

Let us now follow this river through its first and early miles of solitude; a moorland beck in some three miles of flow among uneven pastures of rush and bent, cotton-grass decorated with fleeces of white in summer, emerald moss margined in spring and

autumn, and we reach the "Moorcock Inn." The Midland railway track has been keeping us company but burrowing at times under the buttresses of Wild Boar Fell, until the Hawes Junction viaduct comes into sight. The "Moorcock Inn" is at the junction of roads leading east down the dale, west down Garsdale and Sedbergh, and north to Kirkby, the way we have come, for we are, though in



Where the Becks Meet--Lunds.

[Edmund Bogg

a valley, just on the low rise which is the water parting--the Garsdale beck flows into the Lune. The inn was formerly in request by sportsmen and tourists, and of good repute. But the railway came; and in the early 'nineties it was badly managed and lost its good name. On my last visit the house seemed to have regained its vogue and excellence; may it be long retained. It is the only hostel between Hawes and Nateby--twelve miles. A mile away is Hawes Junction on the Settle and Carlisle line and the second



highest railway stopping place in England—perhaps also the bleakest and coldest one might add, for, pacing its platform during a long wait, it feels open to the buffets—no allusion to refreshments—of every wind that blows.



The Moorcock Inn.

[John Pratt.]

Before taking the road and river-way round to Hawes it will be as well to give attention to the Fell side road leading from Hawes Junction to the north by west end of Widdale Moor, and so by Wold Fell to Newby Head Inn where the Widdale beck rises on the very verge of the North Riding, and, three miles south-west, the Ingleton and Settle Bleamoor roads meet, and trending over Newby Head the highway follows the dale down nearly to Hawes.

So bidding good-day to our friends at the "Moorcock," we step out past the junction station and take note of the rough road down Garsdale, with Sedbergh and Kendal for its goal. Here we are on the very 'backbone' of Northern England, the

Pennine chain, the water-parting whence the tiniest rills flow either west or east. The Garsdale beck, reinforced from gills from Baugh Fell's black furrowed flanks finds its way to the Lune and the western seaboard; the Yore and its tributary waters from Mossdale, Cotter and Widdale into the turbid Humber flood-way. So we now follow the steep Fell road over the south-west shoulder of Widdale, to the north Great Shunner, High Seat and Wild Boar heights uprearing massively, with the huge bulk of Baugh Fell to the west. To the south-west the ridge of Whernside and the flank of Ingleboro' upsurge until they mingle with the cloud. Ugh! how the wind whistles through the wiry bents and threatening sheets of shadow sweep over hill and hollow, and forming fine effects. Garsdale and Dentdale, the one brown crooked the other a deep green gorge, with the craggy Rysell ridge betwixt seem to gouge deeply into the foundations of the everlasting hill, as it seems a furrowed sea turned to stone. The fell steeps of olive green shade below into emeraldine pastures, chequered over with grey lines of walls, and sparsely dotted with white-walled farmsteads, once the homes of that sturdy independent quakerly class of men of these remote valleys, full of sterling character. They are the "statesmen" of Dentdale. Away yonder, set midway down the green vale, is the little 'town' of Dent, its capital sheltering under its crags. On the Rysell side, within our Richmondshire limits, grows the rare and silvery-backed leaved Alpine Lady's-mantle, while down by the water, on the thickety margin of its lower reaches, grows the creeping Bell-flower 'Rampion.' We have now left the walled-in track. The outlook becomes wider—the impression of aloft solitariness more pervading. The only visible signs of life are a few nimble black-faced sheep, ('hoggets' they are called), the cross whirr-away of a muircock or a plover, and the uneasy flitting to and fro, upon a stone here an instant there a moment, of a stone-chat in the well-



Gaping Ghyll.

G. T. L. W.

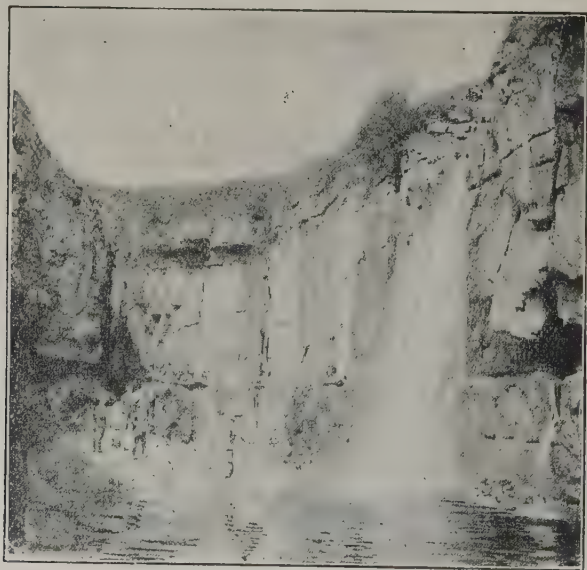
nigh dry bed of the infantile Widdale beck. Turning the shoulder ridge of Wold Fell we now drop down to Newby Head Inn, situated near the water-parting of Ribble and Yore. To the south-west lies the Cave land (see picture) so often explored by the Yorkshire Ramblers. The view here has distinct character: yonder over the declining contour line of Cam End, its face to the west and south, we glimpse "the hunchback of Yorkshire hills," Pen-y-ghent, which crouches, a mighty crumpling of a mountain, above Horton. And some three miles Hawes-ward from where we stand, the Widdale beck is joined by that of Snaizholm valley stream. This short dale contains a very few old and quaint homesteads or gaardies, some dating back to 1640. They were largely tenanted in the past by families of one name—Allen—a rather numerous clan about Gayle and Hawes. They all "cam oot o' Snaizholm" as they will tell a stranger with not a little pride.

During the forepart of the 19th century in the upper part of this dale dwelt a singular character, an old shepherd or hind, known as "Tom at Fell." A local poet wrote verses in his honour of which only the tag—

"In Snaizholm Head,  
And close by Ouse high well,  
There lived a man call't Tom at Fell."

—a mere fragment, but it has certes a gusto of the native peat-land and heather, where by the "hut" (a shooting box) of Captain Fryer, in the first watery gleams of dawn the moor cock 'beck' and whistle to their mate hens cowering down among the bushy knee-high grouse grounds of whortleberry and heather. After an uneasy vigil in the hut, the baccy short and the peat fire burning low, to sally forth before the mists of dawn have been wholly 'scat' by the morning wind, and witness the antics of the amorous gamefowl is an adventure indeed that stirs the blood as well as any draught of the "mountain dew" one may have made a night

of it with. One feels so close to Nature at such a time, the very heart of the moor palpitates and the listener's heart pulses with it. There is a pretty cascade in Snaizeholme-dale, festooned with tresses of water-moss and many a springing shuttlecock-like growth of fern—hart's tongue, and green spleenwort, and spray besprent film-fern, in plenty. Probably there has never been a single



Hull Pot, near Penyghent.

trowel grubber to hale them away to the smoky curtilages of the big towns. In a neighbouring plantation—Widdale Car Wood—grow thousands of the loveliest star-flower—the primulose Wintergreen is its name—but its white thread-like rootlets are so sensitive to disturbance from their ferny leaf mould that to extricate them from the soil without fatal injury is almost impossible. So the film-fern and the star-eyed wildflower remain here in indimmed beauty as a shrine for Nature-lovers to make a pilgrimage to.



Proceeding down Widdale now we note the high ridge is in shadow, a tone of deep blue, being on the low tier of the sunset sky, across which storm clouds trail ominously ; and bulking out away to the north, over the brow of Ten End, is the giant mound of Shunner, and to the east the stepped scarp of Stags Fell below the cut-off line of light is in blue-grey shadow too. At intervals down the dale are grey old farmsteads sheltered by a few



Thornes Gill

sycamore trees. We note pleasurable two things—so simple—how patiently the “coos” stand in the garths or pastures for the milking, and afterwards the men toil farmwards or Hawesward with the cans strapped to their backs.

It is the evening of a market day at Hawes, and we mark the yeoman with wife or daughter, or if bachelor in other company, squiring them dutifully back to one or other of the isolated farms lying between Hawes and Chapel-le-Dale, Ingleton way or Dent-

wards. During our gossip we have so shortened the way that lo! here we are at the Hawes' side Town Head; but before we describe this we must hark back in fancy to the Moorcock again in order to better follow the valley of Yore down by Thwaite Bridge to where the mossdale burn leaps from its dark solitude.



Lower Mossdale.

[A *Haselgrave.*

Mossdale is a short solitary wildly picturesque glen. At the upper end are two forces, which J. M. W. Turner painted, presenting a wide contrast in character. One is a stair-cased kind of mare's-tail cascade, dropping in zig-zag leaps from sixty or eighty feet down a rift in a fir-wooded bank with a scarred precipice on one side. The other fall is a bold but weir-like one, the onyx-coloured peat dyed water of the main stream falling in a spreading mass over a bed of Yoredale plate-stone with laminated shales underneath. This force lacks wood but is very fine and bold. Both can be viewed from the same point, although the aspect and

mpress of the twin fall varies according to the condition of the weather—in draught or in flood, or when shadows of oncoming evening settle like a pall over the glen. Then the scene is solemnly impressive. Above the falls is a drear lonesome moor plateau, and some two miles away, on Widdale top, are three or four inky tarns in one of which grows the hair-leaved gaping-lipped yellow water flower, the lesser Bladderwort.

From the highest point of West Widdale we have a grand view the prospect shewing how the uplands of Richmondshire to the north and west rise one over another in sombre lines of a weirdly grand character in the fleeting changing lights, making a moving network of purple grey lines and dappling shadow.

Crossing the Yore again at Thwaite bridge, a little way down dale is Rigg House, a pleasant bower in this high part of the dale. Fine trees project their leafy arms over the road and the whole is of park-like distinction. The house itself was built in the early years of George the Second's reign, by Sir John Hillary. He had amassed great wealth as a West Indian merchant, but an adverse fate was his: he fell a prey it is said to the wild gambling tendency of the age. The Metcalfes' of the Ashes (at Hawes) lent on a mortgage, which not being redeemed, foreclosure on the property took place. Behind the house the outline of park and garden close is still to be made out. This family also held land about Hawes and Burtersett. Hillary House, at the latter place, was a residence of theirs. From Rigg House the road runs under an avenue of trees, the river brawling over its rocky bed on our right hand, and the perfume of woods and meadows being very sweet.

Further down the dale, below where the Cotter beck runs under the road, and the brawling Yore runs for long distance under steep bank in a veritable arcade of trees—wild plum, a sheet of pearly white when in flower being conspicuous amongst the

rest, possibly the bird-sown survivals of Rigg's House orchard—the Yore itself is crossed by a peaked bridge and we are in the quaint little village of Appersett—the upper *set* or place to distinguish it from Burtersett. It is a squat, grey, and dilapidated dale village of some size and character, with its own high-saddle



Mossdale.

[Owen Bowen.]

briglet over the Widdale beck, and its noisy fine turfed goose green. It is par excellence the goose village of the dale, tho' geese hiss and solemnly waddle on their own business intent with airs of vast importance, their sentinel gander on guard, at Gayle as well as here. A large number of this intelligent and, for a tame thing, wary bird are reared here, their nesting lockers finding a warm lodgment in the house places of the villagers. What a quaint

picture one views when on a visit to old Nanny this or Grannie that, and we see a brace of geese, sitting on their eggs observing the stranger keenly and gravely as if listening to the conversation!

A few hundred yards north of Appersett the Widdale beck joins the Yore. A field by the road on the east of the village is sure to attract the attention of passers-by: it has in it one conspicuous and solitary tombstone. It marks where rests one Jackson of this place—an immigrant, from his patronymic—of the Sandemanian (often called Glassite) Creed. Not desiring interment in consecrated earth, he had this 'field of death' prepared in his lifetime, and was laid to rest here without funeral rites! Who shall judge, or say he sleeps any the less well?

Some little distance up the Widdale beck, was formerly a very ancient cottage tenanted in the early years of 1800 by an ancient man who tended sheep on Widdale moor. He was known as "John o' t' Bog." When his cot was re-roofed some thirty-five years ago, a goodly store of silver coins of the Stuart period was found.

The Yore between Appersett and Hawes calms down somewhat and flows in many a loop and backset through low-lying marshy land (receiving the waters of Fossdale or Hardraw becks), with a low terrace slope or scar on either bank at some little distance from the flat Car-land in which it meanders, until a mile below Hawes it receives the waters of the Black-burn-sike from Wether Fell slope and forms a reed fringed pool or tarn known as the 'Backwater.' The river has now grown in volume though not in volubility, and the striking thing to be taken note of is, that many centuries ago this part of the dale was an elongated lake or 'wheel' much bigger than Semerwater. The banking terrace scars mentioned above were then the banks of the lake-like expansion, and the waters were the resort of an immense and



variable congregation of wild fowl, ducks, snipes and sandpipers, is almost proved by the 'Backwater' and the Low Scar being even yet visited annually for breeding purposes by both sandpiper, mallard, and other birds, in whom the inherited habit or instinct is so strong that May every year sees them by the now narrow stream, the air vocal with their whistles or honking call-notes. The sandpiper brings off fresh broods annually within a mile of this Capital of the Upper dale.



Cotter Force.

[Edmund Bogg.]

## CHAPTER VIII.

## ROUND ABOUT HAWES.

NOT very distant—some six miles—from the head of Wensleydale, “up Bank” as the natives put it, on the lowmost limestone terrace slope of Wether Fell rests the little market-town of Hawes. One rising cobble-stoned street, with a little square called the Holm on one side, and the Church Bank on the other, few of the dwellings planted with a regular face to the roadside but end-on, or anyhow. The town cannot be said to possess any striking natural advantages except that it is above the level of any likely river spate, and on the dale’s main road, east to west by south over Newby. It lies on a limestone pavement of underlying rock, some twenty to thirty feet above Yore bed level.

Although it has long been the Capital of Upper Wensleydale as Leyburn is of the Lower, Hawes is not, strictly, an ancient place. Its beginning does not date beyond the middle of the 15th century. In maps of Camden’s time (1696) its site is spelt Harse-side, and marked with a tower as possessing a Church, but as a place of note its soar into the ken of the world outside the dales of Swale, Ribble and Dent, probably began with its Charter of a Market. Askrigg and Bainbridge preceded it by centuries, and Domesday book does not even mention its name, nor do any later historians up to about 1650. Yet Gayle (or Gale), a village adjoining Hawes, as a settlement doubtless dates back beyond the Roman Invasion. Anyway, here at Hawes, about the early years of the 15th century, the ‘forest’ owners and husbandmen had made a clearing on the

hawthorn clad strip of ground safe above the river, and as it was gradually denuded of its timber and brushwood, stock was introduced and reared and the settlement soon grew into importance until, in the year 1485, a Chapel of Ease was needed, and established by no less a personage than King Richard the Third; and one James Whalley—of the dale family of that name—was the first priest, and his first stipend “to sing at the Chappelle of the Haws, in Wensladale for oon yere,” was the magnificent sum of “Seven Marks!”



A Peep of Hawes Church.

[*Edmund Bogg*]

Yet if Hawes has no hoary record there are evidences in the shape of flint arrowheads, stone hammers, and other ancient weapons of offence and defence, and implements of antiquity,

found in its vicinage which lead one to suppose that the Celt roamed these wilds, and struggled as Early Man had to do for a bare subsistence in inhospitable wilds ere ever the Roman Eagles floated from the ramparts of Bracchium.

After the 15th century had flown the town grew steadily in importance as a centre for folk to go to for this need or that. The up-to-this-time means of access to the place were mere tracks in unlevelled earth, over moss and through 'forest'; stony brush and hagglan were turned into something like shape of highways or bridle roads, though bad enough for generations longer; yet gradually wheeled intercourse with the adjoining dales became more frequent. In 1699 William the Third granted a Charter for a weekly market to be held on Tuesdays, and Two Fairs yearly. There are several Cattle Fairs now.

The writer once came into Hawes on the evening of the October Ram Fair, and the 'clarty' greasy state of the street, and the overpowering odour of sheep in the air will not soon be forgotten. Hand-loom weaving and knitting was the old industries here, but for nigh a century now there has been quarrying for stone with some mining for coal (above Gayle and on the south face of Stag's Fell), and even lead mining has been ventured upon, although nothing so extensively in Wensleydale as in Swaledale if we except the big mine a mile or two west of Leyburn.

Previous to its connection with two trunk lines of railways (North-Eastern and Midland) in the 'seventies of the nineteenth century, Hawes was a place set apart—a little world to itself, sufficient for itself and wellnigh inaccessible in less than a long day's journey from any town of importance like Kendal, Richmond or Skipton. For long years strings of pack horses bore the town's merchandise to Kendal or Northallerton, or farther afield to Bradford or Leeds, returning laden with the exchange and barter—goods required for use in the upper dale. Hand-knitting was the

regular occupation for not only women, but men even whilst walking out or tending sheep or visiting, the ball of coarse "bump" would be carried and the clicking of the needles go on! It was a thing well understood in the dales that when a young couple married, if both were expert knitters, whatever their shortcomings in housewifery or husbandry experience, they would 'do all right'—get on in the world! In those days, too, not a hundred years ago, the pedlar and the smallwares huckster of "Thread Jack" type were always welcome callers in the far apart hamlets and gaardies, for the change of a new face and a new tongue, as well as the fluster and curious joy born of an inspection of their unfolded wares. These itinerants retailed the news of the outer world, as well as the latest bit of gossip from a nearer but still far enough off country side. Even the mendicant class, says Gilbert Bradley, was not unhonoured—such had usually a square meal put before him, and a bed provided in some nook or corner of the house or 'hay-mow,' and when he left, staff in hand, he stepped out like a man standing well with himself and of honourable calling, his meal bag slung over his shoulder replete with meal, bacon and other provender. This was in the days too—or rather we ought to say, *nights*—of Rushlights; tallow dips were expensive luxuries, and the rats not averse to raiding the "candle-barques." The rushes were gathered on the wet fell slopes and in the low-lying fields in late summer, and having been stripped of their skins the white pencils of pith were dried and then dipped in hot sheep's fat several times. When sufficiently coated they were placed in a sort of nipper or tweezer attached to an upright candle stick. They gave *some* light certainly, but it was so feeble that its glimmer only served to make the gloom of an apartment the gloomier.

Hawes, as has been said, is a town of one principal street, a twisty, higgledy-piggledy medley set-anyway walls and roofs, yet



all stoutly built, the courses of stone laid sloping outwise so as to keep out 'weather'—and successfully. There are two or three side streets or alley-ways, one called the "Neukin," another "the Holme," all running along a rising neck of land about 850 feet above sea level. Phillips says its name suggests Hals, a *neck* of land, there being another place similarly situated in Coverdale, the 'l' being silent in speech; but a more likely etymology would derive it from *hæge*, Anglian for an enclosure, a hedged in place. *Haugr* (Norse) is a heap, and *Haugh* (Gaelic) a low-lying field or brae. The occurrence of the Scots word 'Neukin' (a nook) in Hawes, however, is suggestive; Hawes is set on a brae or long terrace on the slope, and the early name *Ha's-side*, meaning the place on the side of the haugh, or even on the site of the haughs, would bear this out. The haw or hagg thorn too, is both native in Upper Wensleydale and a fine feature, great natural parks of ancient trees of it yet existing on the north slope of the dale opposite Appersett and near Hardraw. So its name may be derived from the forest of hawthorns—the Haws.

Yet be this as it may, without any ancient charter *the Hawes*—as the natives call it—has long been the metropolis of West Yoredale, and many a "Mayor" elected by custom of acclamation at the White Hart has worthily upheld the traditions of office handed down to him by unwritten law. A Chapman—the miller—was Mayor in the first years of the 'eighties.

A new era opened for Hawes when the Iron Road was laid on sleepers past its doors. The old *status* gave place to the new, yet the keen pure pungent thyme-scented mountain air one breathes in the old town (except at Fair-time, when naphtha and hams defile it for the nonce) remains ever the same, the clean exhilarating feeling it confers with every breath as one perambulates the neighbourhood, and finds the human dwellers thereabout to be so kindly. Hawes's connection by rail slowly destroyed its knitting

by hand. Bump and loom are about things of the Past. From like cause, many or some of the old customs of the place have fallen into disuse too, and one, if not more, best honoured in the breach than in the observance. We refer to "Riding the Stang." This was a public holding up of 'Reputation to Execration,' and not exclusively for the old offence of "wife-beating." A ram's head fixed upon a Guy was burnt on Fifth of November in the 'seventies and 'eighties to the chorus of "Wild Shepherds watch their flocks by night" for offences which had outraged the moral sense of the inhabitants. Ah well! both pilloried ones and perpetrators of that parody of public opinion have nearly all gone to their rest. To-day this little Capital of the Richmondshire Borderland is not a whit behind the times. Tired city men and sufferers from nervous sleeplessness would do well to try a week's change of air here. They might not become Rip van Winkles, but they would enjoy each breath they drew by day, and by night be lulled to slumber by the lullaby of falling water; and if one may judge from the presence on market days of the many stalwart dalesmen of advanced years, the district must be good both for the appetite and mind. Yet Hawes is busy enough, bustling and to spare, on market days. "The End of the World," says one; "T'last pleaace God meade," says another. Yet if one stands at either end of the town on a market day, one may well wonder where all the stalwart dalesmen and buxum apple-cheeked sonsy women and girls come from. The old yeoman and statesmen come flocking in with their wives and daughters from a hundred and one farmsteads, in Cotter and Forsdale, Garsdale and Lunds, Dent, Ribbleshead, Outershaw, Yockenthwaite, and Cam; from Aysgarth and Askrigg, Bainbridge, Countersett, Marsett, Worton and West Burton and Thornton Rust; aye! and from further afield. From the western recesses of Swale they have climbed the brae to the Buttertubs and so on to the Hawes; and their talk?—its staple topic is hogs, hoggetts,



Gayle Beck, Moonlight, Hawes.

[Gilbert Foster

gimmers, stags, coos, cauves, cheese and butter and eggs, fowls, and—everything that is or might be the “milk and honey” of their luxuriant pastures. Writing of sheep reminds one of the following story. An aged yeoman of Hawes had an only son, a youth of (age unknown) but precocious talent (in his own estimation) for farming. He was particularly anxious to take the burden of the farm at home, such as the buying and selling, off his father’s hands. About this time the old farmer’s sheep became infected with some disease, and he was very eager to sell out before matters

got any worse. "Jack," said he one day, "the dealer is coming to buy sheep; they're getting worse, an' ah'll sell oot at onny price. Noo, Jack, when thoo sees us haggling ower t'price, thoo mun call oot 'Ye mun divide!'" Unfortunately for the scheme, Jack came on to the scene too soon, and finding the dealer had not begun the deal, said he, "Noo ye mun be varry sharp and get em bowt, for me father says they're varry bad wi' scab, and he's willing to sell out at onny price; and when ye and him are haggling I ha' to come up and say, 'Noo then, ye mun divide!'" The sequel needs no telling.

It is well to visit Hawes in the hayng-time, and inhale deep breaths of the perfume of newly-mown half dry grass off the sweet limestone meads, and store it up in your memory when in less rural scenes; or if you are a fly-fisher come up to Hawes in Spring, when the primroses dapple the ground of the water side copses with clots of bloom, and go a-fishing for the speckled trout or the sleek silver grayling along with "Sproats"—the 'watcher' of these waters! His skill has something of the uncanny in it—he can hook a trout, or more, at one cast where others fail, and the meanwhile reel you many a yarn. And there is tumult and bustle on weekly market days, and lively 'goings-on,' only one must keep out of the way of the fast trotter (for sale) shewing off his paces, "gingered" it may possibly be; or of that young and lively bullock chased by stalwart dalesmen, that seems as if he would run amuck of the stalls in the wide street. The first thing striking the visitor on entering the town from the station yard is that from the skew bridge over the chasm over Gayle Beck. After a 'fresh,' when the spray from the deeply sunken force is lit up by sunlight, the picture is charming. Flowering plants and tiny fern tufts hang out of the niches of the plate rocks, all sappy green and bediamonded in spray with matted growths of liverwort, and by the wooden mill cut among them in summer may be seen the gaping

blossom of the monkey flower. The swish and boom of the water when at flood is almost deafening, the picturesque dripping floats of the mill wheel throwing up water adds to the turmoil of sound ; but to thoroughly understand the roar one needs to be trying to



View on the Yore—Sproats landing a Catch.

sleep at the Temperance guest-house adjoining the foss—that is, at flood-time. The sound which startles the ear of the stranger seems to stamp—as with a die—its impress on the whole district ; it is a land of becks and forces, cascades and cataracts, everywhere one goes one hears and sees rapidly running water, tinkling or bubbling

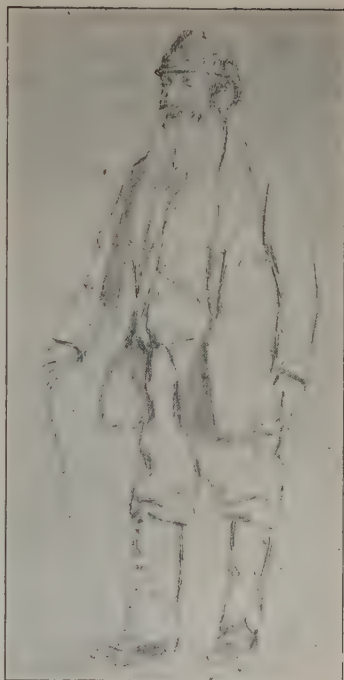


from this scar or that bank, tramp where one will, and at most of them man or beast may drink and be satisfied.

Many a story might be told of Hawes characters in the last century. There was for instance Wade the saddler; Blenkhorn, the street sweeper and dealer in turf. There was Clement Scarr, a staunch Catholic, and local adviser on Law matters—a great orator and politician to boot. This man regularly on Sundays walked from Hawes to Leyburn and back (thirty two miles) to attend service after the manner of his Faith. Another face that lingers in the memory is that of the old cobbler, with the tap-tap of his hammer on hide hard by the church gates: he to oblige his customers put many a wooden sole on to ‘uppers’ scarcely worth the expense. To our remarks he would answer, “If fowks bring ma booits to clog, ah mun clog ‘em.” Such a craftsman working away under the sound of the silvery sweet-toned bells of Hawes Church—a comparatively modern structure with a four square stone tower, in which Swifts bring up their broods of two year by year—could nevertheless be distracted not and make a pair of “hand-sewn” fit either for any Lord to wear when tramping the heather of Stag’s Fell, or for “Sproats” to “turn t’watter” when wading in the river. The old 16th century Chapel of Ease was taken down in 1850, and the present structure erected. The Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages in existence only dates back to 1695. Later the church was beautified by a one-turret clock tower and its set of bells which—save the mark—are tubes of steel toned to emit a “linked sweetness long drawn out,” which is most pleasant to the ear. Many other interesting impressions of Hawes flood on one’s mind, but space to tell it all is denied: the clear sunlit landscapes ever to be seen, alike yet different, when walking the main street, or going by the flagged road to Beulah (which means beautiful) Bank towards Gayle; the cloud shadows chasing one another up the slopes of Stag’s Fell or Wether Fell, according

to the wind, are infinitely various yet ever charming to follow with the eye; the cows crowding together near some gate at a garth corner for their evening relief—the milking—the bowed forms of men taking their foamy can-loads home; the ‘throng’ time of getting in the hay, the only harvest of the fields up here—the wooden sleighs, or ‘sleds,’ carrying the sweet-smelling crop from the steep slopes of Wether Fell side to the ‘laithes’ and ‘mows’ into the unglazed window places of which it is ‘forked,’ with many a laughing jest of the willing workers—often under the eye of “t’maister” and his family—not unmindful of certain brown stone jars laid by under a grey stone wall. Purl—ale fortified with

gin—*is* nectar after such labour, for although the air is redolent of perfume it is also dust-laden with dry particles from the late flowering grass, which has to be cut, if weather permits, before it has run to seed and taken all the juicy nature out of the blade and stalk. But neither must we forget that at Hawes we are in ‘Mecca’ land—the soil that has seen the birth, the rearing and the death of many a generation of Metcalfes, of Whaleys, of Allens, of Dinsdales, of Thwaites, and of Rouths to mention a tithe only of the patronymics that are as honoured of “auld syne” as are the Chapmans and the Willis’s lower down the dale. Hawes, too, has never



A well-known Figure—A Comfort.

lacked its more than due share of intelligent townsmen of light and leading. It has had Whaleys and Brodericks, men of education, who have each in days past played their part as practical men in advancing the interests and industries of Higher Abbot-side ; until in 1879 the opening of the railway line from Leyburn to Hawes Junction also opened up wider possibilities.



Gayle Knitters,

[J. Pratt,

## A NIGHT SKETCH AT HAWES.

After tea a pipe of 'bacca and a stroll through the town. A group of men stand in the market place ; the non-believers are arguing with the Christians ; the shoemaker is holding forth, anon they all speak together, each side quotes from divers learned books, whereat Bob Routh calls loudly for chapter and verse, "gie us th' chapter an' verse." For such a small town there is quite a surprising number of non-believers ; and erstwhile the low sinking sun is reddening the hill tops, and while the carillon in the church tower is playing its quaint sweet evening hymn, they argue and squabble over their different dogmas. Let us leave them and have a chat with the ancient men on the bridge, meditating, as usual. Slowly they turn themselves round, leisurely they take their clay pipes from their mouths, knowingly they look up and observe the signs of the sky ; at last they speak, "aye, it leuks like bein' middlin' weather to-morn, aye," whereat they thrust their pipes if possible farther in their mouths than before, and resume their silent watching. We pass on. The twilight wanes, the phosphorescence on the western hills dies away, and now the moon appears over the black edge of Wether Fell. Yawber and the long sharp wall of limestone at its top stand out clear and black ; the rest is in deep shadow. Evidently the opinion of the "owd 'uns" is going to be confirmed. Now they are gone and the bridge is deserted. Not so the market place, the theologists are bickering yet ; if it were not moonlight, they would, no doubt, have a lantern, they often do. But now for a last pipe and a drop of "hot," and so to bed, lulled to slumber by the rushing sound of Gayle beck, hurrying past the walls of our bedroom.

## CHAPTER IX.

## GAYLE.

THROUGH the sloping churchyard of Hawes, bearing numerous memorials to the families mentioned in the preceding paragraph, and by the west end of the church runs a paved way, a short cut saving the angle made by the road from Town Head, through the pastureland to Gayle village. Its name is Beulah—locally pronounced Beela—Bank; and on summer eves, aye, and at other times when the moon looks on, it is the trysting place for Gayle lads and Hawes lasses, or *vice versa*. By daylight there is a fine prospect from its pavement—north, south, east, and west—and by night its stiles are best negotiated by girls with assistance of a youth—couples are company. But not being of courting age, Gayle is soon reached, Gayle the most prevalent feature of which is, Water. The broad beck here flows in a channel over slabs of Scar-limestone, cracked here, worn into basin-like holes there by the swirl of water, but everywhere polished and smooth. Gayledale or Aisgill (*ai* a corruption of *eau*, water) is only some four miles in length, yet it comprises many fine sets of scenery, enchanting nooks and fairy dells, gay with wild flowers galore in their season, wild pink rose, golden-tassel hawkweed, white starred woodruffe (sweetest when dead and dried), and mossy Queen's cushion. These grow both at and below the Force, and on the very precipitous bank east of the fall is a thicket of the true wild alpine red-currant. A rare fern, the limestone Polypody, grows by the beck a little above Aisgill. Below the force the



stream runs down over an irregular floor of successive limestone and dark shale rocks, in a gorge or canopied arcade or overhanging trees "where twilight reigns at high noon-tide," a green limpid glade pierced by gleamy shafts of light that, falling on the beryl-clear green water, babbling ever like a glad child as it chases along, make of the narrow colonnade an enchanted passage to a



Aisgill Force.

[John Pratt

fairy palace. This reach of the stream is alike the dipper's and the kingfisher's haunt, a fit spot for the abode of Undine; Pan with his pipes, even, would hardly seem more out of place than the enchantress of the Rhine. Here in summer the lively sandpiper twits in shrill alarm, and flirting its tail, darts off at every strange footfall approaching its mate's nest, somewhere among the thymy verdure of the bank. At the force itself the bare sections of the

dark grey cliff-side shale shew, sticking out because harder and weather resisting, brown nodules of ironstone; and stone 'thunderbolts'—the pointed fossilised dead horns of a Belemnites, a cuttlefish which dwelt in the sea eons ago when the shale was formed by the deposit of sediment—have also been found. Professor Sedgwick, the geologist, visited this place, with Owen Dinsdale of Gayle, then a lad, for guide. Half a century and more has passed since then, but Owen is still an interesting companion with whom the writer has had more than one pleasant tramp.

Aisgill Force has a fall of 46 feet, and Professor Phillips describes it as "a most pleasing cascade, remarkably full of fossils." It careers over the lip of a level table of Yoredale rock, flowing down over a broad rather protruding cliff of dark shale, into a 'dub' or basin-like pool. It has, broadly speaking, a fan-shaped outline, widest at bottom, and is flanked by overhanging trees; a wealth of mossy growth and wild flowers drape and festoon the banks on either hand, composing a *mise-en-scene*, charming both as a whole and in detail, and in its character forming an agreeable contrast to almost every other waterfall in the district, the only one having a sort of general resemblance being White Fell Gill.

Wide of Aisgill, to the west, half a mile above Gayle, is a farm named "Gaardy"—that being a pure Norse word for a home or farmstead of some importance. And indeed Gaardie farm has one distinction—according to the late Rev. Christopher Whaley, the Hill Fair held at Askrigg from 1798, was in 1817, "owing to the intended enclosure of part of the 'common lands'" removed to and held at "Gaardie near Gayle" for two or three years. It was then taken back to Askrigg, but for a 'sheep fair,' by reason of its nearness to the main road up Widdale, Gaardy was perhaps the more central site. From the brae near by there is a grand prospect of Wensleydale from the shadowing wall of Wild

Boar's Fell to the Carperby Moors above Bolton Castle. Full north, across valley, on the slope of Stag's Fell, west of the dark gash made by the Simonstone flag quarries, the road into Swaledale may be seen winding sinuously upwards; just below where we stand Rookhurst in its grove (well named, for it is the hurst of rooks)



A Bit of Gayle, shewing the home of "Black Lenn." [R. Rodwell

nestles and slumbers in the sun, but although the hall is a comparatively modern structure signs of early occupation are apparent: green cross lanes and a few old decrepit laithes and laith-like cottages make a network around it, and on some of them onlinger old world herbs used in rural or beastal pharmacy, such as monk's-rhubarb dock and masterwort kex, whilst the old walls and rocky

places about where the original garden garth used to be, are the only spots in the North of England where grows the clasp-leaf hawkweed, gay with big golden heads of blossom and sticky hairy stems. These three plants were discoveries of Dr. Lees while resident at Park House.

Gayle might not inaptly be termed the water-village, founded upon a rock on the banks of a stream which tumbles and shoots past its very doors in a staircase of broad shallow stepped rapids, plunging forward with irresistible seething force when in spate. Or it might be dubbed the goose village, for the place swarms with 'gabblers, large numbers being fed up here, some reared from the nest, some bought of the goose-drivers who convey large flocks of them, lean grey-lag and brent, into the dales from Ireland at certain fixed seasons of the year. The whole aspect of the place is full of 'character,' picturesque in its hard dilapidated way, old walls and roof of grey stone, its streets a 'Y' shape, its houses set at all angles to the road, the broad beck, like a highway of Nature's own for the passage of her train, running unhindered through the 'camp' of house-dwellers, step by step over the rocky highway which determines its course. It caracoles onwards to the mill where it leaps over a deeper step of rock in a cascade of spray and is lost to the eye a few hundred yards lower down.

As a settlement, Gayle is probably one of the most ancient in the dale. Its very name bespeaks its Celtic founding and origin—its situation, too, both betokens antiquity, and (again) suggests water. There is a Gala in Scotland—water, a river, and a town, Galashiels, on its banks. There was a community gathered together at Gayle when Hawes was not. Clints House—clint, a rock—Gayle, is a residence of the Routh family who have held lands in Wensleydale from the days of the Plantagenets. The family were settled soon after the Conquest at Ruda or Routh, four miles

from Beverley, one, Amandis-de-Ruda, living there in 1119, and from him the Rouths are descended. Up-gate is a curious twisted street, and here is an old house bearing on the lintel the initials A E M and the date 1669. Bridge House is another specimen of an old-time dale dwelling, bearing the date 1665. It was formerly a possession of the Allens, yeomen. The last of the clan who held it, Leonard, died here at the age of 96; from his dark and swarthy visage he was known as Black Lenn. He was a giant in bulk, and a man of great strength. The inhabitants stood in awe of him, and to the younger generation he was quite a terror. Even to this day the Gayle mothers will 'hush' their children with the warning, "Wil't tha be quiet, or else Black Lenn'll hev' thee!" The people at Gayle—superstitious as the older generation of dalesfolk are—say Black Lenn revisits the stage of his 'earthly pilgrimage'; unaccountable knockings and other noises being often heard. Apart from Lenn's nocturnal movements, there is—or was—a barguest at Gayle, prone to make strange noises, too, to prowling grumbling and rumbling about on stormy nights some thirty years ago. It was an uncanny midnight disturber, and the howlings and screamings are alleged to have frozen the very blood of the hearer through fear! "It's all as true as t'Gospel," inquirers will be told. Modern science, however, with its knowledge of the pranks wind and water underground can play in a district like this of honey-combed limestone, has suggested practical explanations. The elder generation of inhabitants still tell of one of the mighty 'sensations' this night-loving sprite caused.

In times not long gone by (perhaps a-lingering yet), there was often great feud and local rivalry betwixt Hawes and Gayle. "Hey, for Gayle!" was for generations the slogan or battle cry of Gayle, whilst the youths of Hawes by way of retaliation would tauntingly cry, "Yo can shute (shout) but yo' can't buy owt i' Gale." The old brig was, and still is, the rendezvous of old and



young, and here the 'gay sparks' were wont to assemble on summer nights to make music, and sing, and dance backwards and forwards across the bridge until the early hours of the morning. Old Tom Mecca, alias Drummer Tom, was usually to the front with his fiddle; a "pearty lile" chap was Drummer, and his brother, Chris Metcalfe, Kit Mecca, was also a fiddler. There were others, and every man jack of them had his nickname or soubriquet, according to where he came from or what family name he bore. There were high jinks indeed on the brig on these nights. As the excitement and hilarity waxed, and lads and lasses whirled to and fro, "Hey, for Gayle!" was shouted from lusty lungs until the very walls of Hawes—half a mile off—echoed with the cry. One need not take this quite for gospel, but it is a fact that there are blank laith walls near Gayle in hemmed-in situations—one such was near where Mat o' Bands lived—that will give back distinct echoes to the human voice quite a field's length away, which may help to explain why underground noises in this district repeat themselves so startlingly by night. In these revels the Metcalfe's, Allen's, Iveson's and Dinsdale clans seem to have had the chief following; and judging from the tomb names in the little Sandemanian graveyard, that of Allen predominated.

A few hundred yards from Gayle along the old fell road leading to Bainbridge, is a "rath" or moated camp site, due possibly at first hand to Teutonic invaders—probably it is 8th century work. The purpose of this strongly-entrenched site has been one of both offence and defence as against the British people of Gale who (at that time) had not all been driven out of their mountain fastnesses. The site is near a little stream that by small labour could be made to surround the *home* with water as an additional defence against attack. The present road runs right over—or rather through—the central and highest part of the site.

A mile or so east from Gayle is the compact fell-side village

of Burtersett, set in a fine healthy position on a limestone terrace of the mountain slope. It commands fine views of the Upper dale, with Hawes in the foreground. The 'Knot' above it has an even wider prospect, since the Bain valley with Semerwater comes into view. The giants of the Pennines shew out majestically. It is an old settlement as its name reveals: in early Norman days a fortified spot, a forest abode in those of the Plantagenet Kings. It has a fair sprinkling of antique houses, the frames of the doors and windows very thick and well lime-washed. As has been said, Hillary Hall, now occupied by Mr. J. Mason, farmer, was formerly a seat of Sir Henry Hillary, who also owned Rigg Park House, west of Appersett. From Burtersett the fell road runs low down the declining slope of the Wether ridge to Bainbridge. Over the ridge lies bay-like Semerdale with its water of witching legend, Marsett and Stalling Busk, and Dr. Fothergill's Carr End, and firry Raydale.



## CHAPTER X.

## SEMERDALE AND SEMERWATER.

FROM Burtersetts we strike south up over Burtersetts Knot, the last eastern prominence of the Wether Fell ridge; it is a stiff uphill climb with a stony heathery slack to cross before we reach the southern rim of the fell that shelters Marset and Semerdale, but being mainly limestone rock at the surface it is gay in places with silver-star leadwort and milk white saxifrage and pink-eyed mealy primrose. We cross the 'green way,' an old Roman track which runs up the long ridge from Bainbridge, in a straight lonely line, walled on each side for the most part, and making a bee line for Cam where it dips again into Ribblesdale, and so on to Ingleton—"the mountain Cam, whose crown from snow is seldom free," said the poet, but he more probably meant the Dodd, a good deal higher and more exposed, of which Cam is a southwestern rampart. A little while after going athwart this ancient green way, we rise a little between scars of crumbling stone on the ledges of which grow *Saxifrage granulata* and the alpestra cinquefoil (*Potentilla*), known here long ago to the famous Dr. Fothergill, whose home was Car End on the north-west border of Sea-mere-water. The maritime Plantain or Way-bred, grows here also, a relic of the time when such sea-side plants were at home on the shore of some long-ago receded lake. It must have been so, when the hills rose above it, long geological ages ago. But there remains the fact that seaside plants grow here and also about Woodhall lead mine above Nappa, where the Sea-Thrift, of cottage garden borders, is likewise abundant. From the lip of the basin in which

North Yorkshire's beautiful lake lies like a mirror, we descend by a steep zig-zag path to the trough-like depression (almost ringed round by hills) of Semer with its forked dells of Raydale and Mar-dale. Here, shut in, out of sound of railway whistle even, is a little domain of unique character, a green oasis in a highland plateau of purple and grey, wherein the sons of Odin or Fingal might still revisit the homeland of their adoption. Sunken in the lewth of guardian hills, a beryl crystal in a mosaic of green divided by grey lines (walls) Semerdale is like no other place in Yorkshire. Round the sloping shores of the lake are three villages, Marsett at the west angle, Countersett on a bluff at the north-east end, and lower down on the south border Stalling-Busk. These are strung together by the white 'harled' halls or farm-gaardies of Thwaite, Carr End, Raydale House and High Blean, where in the 'sixties abode a not-soon-to-be-forgotten character, George Robinson, Esquire, of brass-band fame. Of him more hereafter. At the upper end of the lake are the picturesquely wooded and water-falled ravines of Bardale, Raydale and Cragdale, of almost Norwegian character, many successive 'fosses' over stair-like limestone and shale rocks, plumed with spruce fir plantations, the home to-day of Britain's tiniest bird—the golden-crested wren. It builds its nest, a compact hanging bag of cunningly woven moss and hair, underneath the outswEEPing branches of the silver fir, and itself, picking the cones for the seeds, seems quite as much at home hanging head downwards as any acrobat of a blue-tit. These ravines are cut back into the hill-ridges in the direction of Oughtershaw and Langstrothdale, but of course not so deeply but that their streams flow down like silver fingers into Semer-dale's lake.

It was from the district of Langstrothdale sprang the two Northern Scholars whom Chaucer made the subjects of his "Reeves' Tale"—

“Of a toun wher they were born, that highte Strother,  
Fer in the North, I can not tellen where.”

Near the source of the Raydale beck, across a dark stretch of Fleet moss with its tarn of inky water, is Oughtershaw, with its tarn too, lonesome and unwooded, but fringed with rush and flag-like vegetation on three of its sides, that to the north being barren and stony. The strata of the Semerdale becks in the higher part of their course is of gritstone and chert beds, and their first declining channels are strewn with ice-scratched grit boulders. Lower down the glen sides are well timbered. About Park Scar the limestone crops out boldly in stepped terraces over which the streams fall as at Aysgarth, but on a small scale, as a series of brightly sparkling cascades, dim with spray, emerald with water mosses of many sorts and gemmed with many wild flower jewels, woodruffe, pink-belled wintergreen, grass of Parnassus, golden rod, and many another. The streams of the three ravines join before reaching the lake, and form the little river Bain—the brightly-flashing (a name of Celtic origin)—and the shortest stream in England called a river, except perhaps the Crow at Aberford. The glens whose waters eternally feed and renew Semerlake are situated in the heart of the ancient ‘forest’ of Bainbridge, adjacent to, and in olden days indivisible from, that of Langstrothdale Chase, once (nay, even now, for Miss Crompton-Stansfield maintains a herd at Buckden) the haunt and fastness of red deer, and infested by wolves, wild boar, and other feral things—if one may judge by their frequent bone remains in the caves of the limestone. A weird charm pervades this remote dale: the wanderer here feels as though penetrating into some forbidden hidden-away gnome-land; the sanctuary and last refuge of an old-world people who have lived and died and lain long hidden away here from a bygone world, the very echoes awakened by one’s voice or a detached stone plunging over a foss, sounding, in fancy’s ear, as though long drawn and expiring in agony from the aisles of a far-away past!





[A. Haselgrave

In Langstrothdale Chase.

# A LEGEND OF SEMERWATER.



ONE DAY A POOR AND AGED MAN  
 PASSED THROUGH THE THRIVING CITY  
 AND MEEKLY ASK'D OF THOSE HE SAW  
 FOR FOOD AND REST IN RITY;  
 BUT ALL SO OLD THEIR HEARTS HAD GROWN  
 WITH CARES AND FASHIONS SPLENDID  
 THE HOMELESS PASSED ON ALONE  
 FAINT, WORN, AND UNBETRIENDED.

\* \* \* \* \*

OUTSIDE THE TOWN A COTTAGE STOOD

THE HOUSE OF SHEPHERD MALCOLM

WHO TOOK HIM IN AND GAVE HIM FOOD

AND REST, AND WARMTH, AND WELCOME

THE NEXT MORNING STANDING AT THE DOOR

HE LOOKED TOWARDS THE CITY

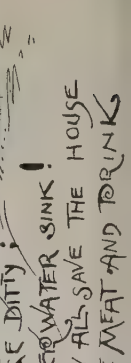
AND RAISED HIS HAND AND MURMURED O'ER

THE WORDS OF THIS STRANGE DITTY:

SEMERWATER RISE! SEMERWATER SINK!

AND BURY THE TOWN ALL SAVE THE HOUSE

WHERE THEY GAVE ME MEAT AND DRINK



AND STILL WHEN BOATING ON THE LAKE  
 WHEN SUNSET CLOUDS ARE GLOWING  
 THE ROOFS AND SPIRES MAY YET BE SEEN  
 BENEATH THE BLUE WAVES SHOWING  
 AND AS THE GALE OF EVENING FALLS  
 NO SOUND FROM LANDWARD BRINGING  
 SOFT MUSIC'S HEARD FROM HIDDEN BELLS  
 DEEP 'NEATH THE WATERS RINGING

\* \* \*

GILBERT FOSTER

Stranded where dropped from some melting glacier before it dipped down Baindale to Bainbridge, at the very foot of the lake of Semerwater, is a large boulder known as the "Carlow" Stone (*Caer*, Celtic, a place, some say a rock; and *lou* or *lough*, a lake), on which are strange marks, "runes of Nature" due to scratching from contact with harder surfaces in the ice period; but, of course, the country folk, who are freit superstitious and fearsome, ascribe these marks to the nails of his Satanic Majesty. This monstrous stone, they tell one—or did, for with a new generation grown up to middle age there is some reluctance to say so boldly—that it was hurled upon a "City" which formerly stood where the lake now lies, and which through the proud selfish wickedness of the dwellers therein—a sort of Gomorrah—wrought out their own destruction. This tale doesn't seem to hold together—if the place was bad it was the Devil's own, why should he destroy what was after his own image?

Another version, whose moral has at least the virtue of inculcating Charity, tells that—"Near the beginning of the Christian era there stood a fair city on the site of the present lake. One cold winter's day there wandered through its streets an angel in the guise of a poor venerable man, scant of clothing, hungry, and with no money in his purse wherewith to buy food and raiment. In vain he begged for food and shelter, but no one gave relief. Passing along the east side of the vale, just without the bounds of the city, stood a small hut, the dwelling-place of an aged couple, too lowly, the legend says, to be allowed to dwell within the precincts of the city. To this humble dwelling came the beggar, but even before he told of his hunger the good dame placed milk, cheese, and bread before him. After satisfying his appetite he bestowed on the kind couple a blessing. Beneath their roof he found shelter for the night, and next morning, after again thanking them, he spread his hands to the proud city and pronounced the following

malediction:—‘Semmerwater rise! Semmerwater sink!’ &c. Then the earth made a hissing noise, the stream grew into a large lake, and the city was no more.” Yet unto this day the natives tell us that the roofs of the buried city are oftentimes seen deep down in the limpid waters. They also point to a hut on the south side of the lake as the dwelling-place of the aged couple who so generously relieved the stranger.

Other lakes have similar legends, Gormire for instance, and Lough Treagh in Ireland.

“ On Lough’s banks as the fisherman strays,  
When the calm clear eve’s declining,  
He sees the round towers of other days  
On the waves beneath him shining.”

The name Semerwater, *three* syllables is merely a triplication of one and the same thing, fluid—sea—mere—water. In its normal capacity it covers about 100 acres of basin bed, and it then plumbs about 45 feet, but when the spates are on in the rainy time of Spring and Fall, its depth is increased and its spread much greater. It contains abundance of cray-fish, has also trout and roach, but its bream are most plentiful. Its shores are visited at seasons of migration by many rare wading birds, swans and wild geese, whose clanging “honk! honk!” overhead, as they string their way to the Pole Star lands where they breed, heard in the dark nights of early spring are counted a portent by the superstitious who hear the strangely mystic moving sound. The common tern, the sea swallow, and several kinds of gulls frequent it, although the black-headed gull has ceased to breed here. At Locker Tarn, on the fell above Carperby, the little grebe breeds, as also on Semerwater occasionally. In 1869 Mr. Pierce Baresford shot a red-throated diver and a black scoter on the lake, and the abundance of great knife-edge swan shells (on which the larger birds are fond of feeding) is a fact of which every bather in Semer-



water should beware. The dunlin shell duck, teal and widgeon, have at one time or another been found here, the pretty little teal duck especially breeding here and also Locker Tarn. In the gill below the lake both the creeper and the green woodpecker—with the garnet head—are, or were, resident breeding birds.

A few of these particulars are taken from a list of Wensleydale Birds published in the *Naturalist*, and compiled from the many year's observation of Mr. Ned Chapman, of Carperby, about 1887. Now dead, he was a kindly-hearted sportsman and—as he was proud to be styled—"freeholder" of that Wensleydale village which owns common rights in the great 'wood' by the Yore there. He will not soon be forgotten by lovers of "Wild Life."

Dr. Fothergill, of Carr End, was not only a botanist and famous physician, but one of the earliest observers of the feathered visitants to Semerdale. His first list appeared as far back as 1832 in *London's Magazine of Natural History*.

The northern shore is boggy and fringed by an ancient alder wood, with many other native water-loving trees and shrubs, yellow in parts with the stately and ornamental Fleur-de-Lis in early summer; a meadow on the rise borders this and above runs the 'high-side' road to Carr End and Marsett, its banks a Paradise to botanists from its richness in wild flowers.

Semerwater and its dale made up a perfect fairyland during the writer's last visit: framed in purple hills, gashed by deeply yawning clefts nigh filled with olive and silver shot green firwoods, whilst the hues of the variously bedight zones of land bordering the lake were delightful in their contrasts, whilst the water-mirror itself reflected the changing blues and silver-greys of the sky as cloudlets swept over it, the lights shimmering within its crystal depths. On the vale's north side, snugly set in a little terraced dell, is the hamlet of Countersett, i.e., cross or country side. This

old home of the fraternity of Quakers, with its quaint huddle of grey walls and mossed roofs, antique porch ways, doors and windows of ancient workmanship, and stone mullions, affords us a genuine glimpse at the domestic architecture of other days. Countersett Hall was the home of George Fox, founder of the "Friends" when journeying in these parts. The black oaken



Countersett

[Edmund Bogg.

bedstead whereon Fox slept was kept here for generations, but it has now disappeared. The interior of the house bespeaks its age, with its black oak ceilings, and twisted stairway, cupboards, and partitions. The windows deeply mullioned are still girded with iron bars, and the antique porch is a charming picture, with its semi-circular doorway, and curious holes and nooks, adorned with brightly scoured pans and milk pails. The brethren

still make pilgrimages, even from over seas, to this and other springs of the Simple Faith in this out-of-the-world corner of Yorkshire; the district is full of veritable shrines hallowed by the recollection of well-lived lives, that put on no airs and aimed but at existences to be passed in peace and in good with men of all nations. On the wall of the ancient inn here is the date, 1667, B.H.J., and an inscription in Latin, which, translated, reads: "Once thine, now mine, but who's after I can't tell." The interior is redolent of age, and is homely with furniture made when a George was King of England.

At the west, north side of the lake, is Carr End, the old home of the Fothergills, quakers of note who came here out of Ravenstonedale in 1606, and settled. This was the birthplace of Dr. John Fothergill, notable both for medical and botanical attainments. His was one of the best collections of wild plants in the north of England. Jessie Fothergill, the authoress of "Kith and Kin," "The First Violin," and other novels, was a later highly-gifted member of the same family. Her descriptions, in the first-named work of the life and 'feeling' of Wensleydale, where the scene is laid, are able and graphic, and her book has been read "the wide, wide world" over. The blossoms of Spring like a bridal veil hung suspended from the trees around the house, bird cherry, crabtree and thorn, when last I passed that way, and seemed as it were, to symbolise the Friends' white and grey garb of peace and purity. The Fothergill 'gaardy' is now a farmhouse, with a suite of rooms facing south held in reserve for the yearly visit of the Pilkingtons, present owners. The old hall and its entourage are characteristic of a bygone age, when such a home had to have all things necessary for life within itself—to be "all sufficient," rooms, byres, stables, barns, etc., all the 'offices' of a mansion or castle in little. The surrounding vegetation is in keeping, various and of old time. Native bird-cherry or 'heck-berry' trees festoon

the scar to the back, with hazel and burtree, ancient yews cast funereal shadows on the moss-grown walks of the pleasance, with fine-grown but not wild sycamore trees (*acer platanoicles*)



Miss Jessie Fothergill.

[John Pratt.]

introduced from the north or central parts of Europe (later recommended by Linnaeus as being very hardy) towards the end of the 16th century—it was a curiosity in Shakespeare's day—which overtop all the rest and are as thoroughly at home as if aboriginal, fed by a spring which issuing from the rocks behind trickles past the house; while yet another clear streamlet races alongside the garden wall. To eye and ear clear and cool—delightsome! This is one

of those ancient haunts of man over which an antiquary is never weary of descanting. Ivy-leaved snapdragon covers the walls with a vesture of green picked out with points of clear purple blossoms, and the native Alpine currant grows on the steep scar and among the ruins of a byre near by.

Both the pasture land head and sandy peaty foot of Semerwater nurture many a pleasing marsh plant of beautiful grace and hue. There is the Alpine bistort—and to quote Dr. Lees—the lovely veined ivory cups of grass of Parnassus, the orange globe-flower and the purple wood geranium, the feathery meadowsweet and the glistening purple-plumed reed, with golden Asphodel, and turquoise-blue water forget-me-not, one and all, but the last especially, to keep in memory Semerwater's crown of wild flowers.

At the north-west corner of Semerdale, shut away from even that quiet vale, is Marsett—smallest of villages, surely. Like several other places in Wensleydale, this was a reputed haunt of the water kelpie. Past its few doors Bar or Mar-dale beck leaps from its prison grille of stone and trees into the more spacious air “of the dome of heaven.” Like other spots in Wensleydale Marsett is sacred to the cult of the goose, bred largely here, white and grey-leg, for feather and table. Their incessant gabbling—when not a-nest or asleep, head in wing—with the trebles of quacking ducks, create quite an uproar here: one must suppose that like humans in some rough towns, the geese are too wise to trust strangers, they are very watch-dogs for notifying the approach of a foot they “dinna ken.” The roughly-built housesteads with yellow harled walls and moss embossed roofs overhung by trees—the drip of which makes the moss grow whether it renders the bedrooms damp or no—have a rural character of their own, quite artistic and charming. Near by, at the north-west angle of the dale is a field known as Knight's Close, and the bases of walls and other inequalities of the ground



seem to point to a substantial hall of some sort having at one time graced this corner of an out-of-the-way region.

Raydale House at the head of Semerdale is picturesquely situated, where Raydale opens out, but it lacks the south aspect and so some of the sunny charm of Carr End. Here the ghost of some old ancestor is reputed to reappear at intervals, and wandering over the stage of his earthly exits and entrances to disturb folk by claiming admittance to his old home. He is locally known as "Oade 'Oppper." My informant stated that she had not only heard "Oade 'Oppper knock," but she had "seen him mony a taine." Raydale House was the scene of perhaps the last act of private and domestic warfare in England. It was in this wise: Sir Thomas Metcalf, known as the 'Black Knight of Nappa,' with an armed force attacked Raydale House, then occupied by a Mrs. Robinson, her husband being absent in London. This was on the evening of June the 4th, 1617. It was the climax to a dispute between the Robinsons of Worton and the Metcalfs of Nappa for "Right of Possession" to Raydale House and lands. The place was in siege from June 4th to June 7th. There were several assaults, each time repulsed by the small but undaunted garrison of three sons and seven serving men. On the first night of attack Mrs. Robinson left the house to confer with Sir Thomas on the meaning of his intrusion. He would not, however, gratify her wishes, saying only his Will was Law. She was not allowed to re-enter, and so was obliged to seek shelter elsewhere. She was untiring in her efforts to obtain assistance to raise the siege, but for some time without avail. On the evening of the 6th, about sunset, another attack was made, when James Hodgson (one of Metcalf's men) was shot and killed. On June 7th, the siege having lasted three days, assistance arrived from York in the person of the Sergeant at Mace and Pursuivant, along with a Justice of the Peace, with divers officers. They took Sir Thomas with several of his company

prisoners, the rest quickly dispersing, and the garrison was 'relieved.' It all sounds very strange to-day! Sir Thomas was fined a Thousand pounds, and further to be imprisoned in the Tower at his own cost during the King's pleasure. Thirty of his following of substance, were fined 500 marks (about £25) apiece. Neither did Lady Metcalf get off scot free. She too was fined for that during the affray she was present encouraging the men to attack, and even tried to persuade a woman to fire the house!



A View of Semerwater. [Owen Bowen.

An old-time Suffragette with a vengeance! At this distant date one may say, "Bravo, Mrs. Robinson and little garrison;" a heroine, whose progeny were no chicken-hearts, without holding the scales between the parties as to which the House by virtue

of right actually belonged. The present structure appears to date from the middle of the 17th century, or perhaps earlier. East of it, a little way, is Stalling Busk, a small village but having a church and burial ground. Here is an ancient house formerly an inn, with moulded doorway bearing date, and antique windows with stone mullions. From here the ancient pack-horse (some say Roman) way over-looking Cragdale wends up and along High Stake (the path was originally way-marked with stakes) pass and down to Cray and Buckden. The view from its summit over Langstrothdale Chase is wildly magnificent, with its fine array of looming hill crests.

The Bain river is (as said) the shortest-coursed in England. Camden says "it issues from the pool Semur with a strange murmur." Gradually its character changes, its bed rockier with many gritstone boulders, when nearing Bainbridge its gradient growing less, it sidles over broad and flat slabs of mountain limestone.—just as the Gayle beck does at Gayle. From the 'camp' town of Bainbridge it drops little by little over stairs and shelves of the same rock until it falls into Yore. To the south-east of the green at Bainbridge, on a sort of a bluff or brae overlooking the Bain, is Brough Hill, the site of the Roman winter camp of *Bracchium*. Its entrenchments are still plainly enough visible. In the Bain's lower reaches the yellow water-lily grows plentifully, and this district is particularly rich in varieties of the wild hedge rose, there are over a score kinds, nearly as many as in the extensive thicket 'Freeholders' Wood' at Carperby, lower down.

Between Semerdale Hall and Countersett the road runs along an avenue of curiously aged and stunted trees, copiously clad in a grey and green garb of moss and lichen; but indeed the air is so pure and keen here and in Upper Wensleydale generally, that this sign of it in lichen growth is not rare. In Cotterdale, Fossdale,

Grange Gill and Skellgill, and in a wood by the road east of Burtersett towards Borwins, one can hardly see bark for moss or stone wall for a curious wire-mat of lichen.

Semerdale Hall is not an ancient of days structure, but the outbuildings clearly belong to an edifice of earlier days. We have now reached the end of our "Richmondshire Borderland" chapters. For a description of Bainbridge the reader is referred to the chapters on "Wensleydale."



Horner, the late Horn-blower of Bainbridge. [Owen Bowen

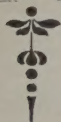
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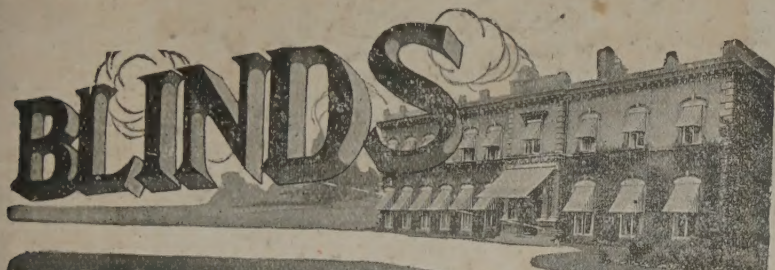
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